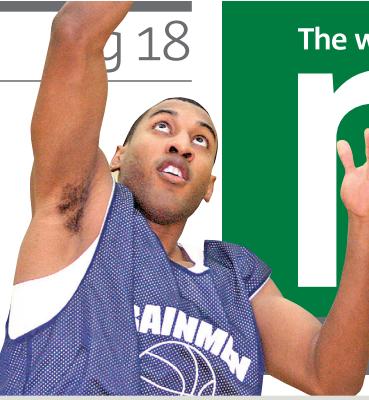


Sports

Jeanty wants to win PBL title



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Celebrity pg 29

Brangelina say no to TV for their kids

Gas prices on the rise once again

AT THE PUMPS The constantly dropping price of gas was too good to last.

Gas was expected to go up by three cents per litre by Friday morning, bringing it to around 76 cents per litre.

The raise bucks the recent trend of falling gas prices, but it's still much less than the price last year of \$1.12 per litre.

PAUL MCLEOD/METRO HALIFAX

Movies pg 22

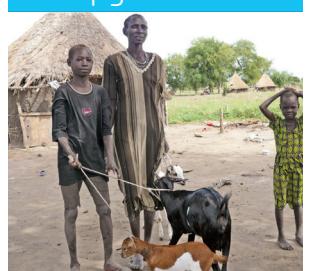


Will Smith is a constant draw

Local pg 3

Prison 'releases' plague system

Local pg 6



Gift of giving helping Sudan

Comments pg 14

Suburbs get no respect

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• WEEKEND, DECEMBER



Justice Minister Cecil Clarke walks into a news conference to announce the findings of an external audit on the corrections system on Thursday.

Jail system guilty

Report condemns 'inefficient' prisons

PAUL MCLEOD
paul.mcleod@metronews.ca

"This report is a dividing line between the way things were done in the past and the way they will be done in the future."

Justice Minister Cecil Clarke

The government says it will accept all 51 recommendations from an audit that says Nova Scotia's jails are hurt by "cumbersome, inefficient processes."

These problems caused many breakdowns — such as Nova Scotia accidentally releasing twice as many prisoners as the national average, according to the Deloitte audit released Thursday.

"We are changing the way we do business," said Justice Minister Cecil Clarke.

"This report is a dividing line between the way things were done in the

past and the way they will be done in the future."

Clarke put former police officer David Horner in charge of making sure all the recommendations are completed.

But at least one major part of the audit won't be pursued.

The report said having sheriffs and police splitting the duty of escorting prisoners around would be more efficient and cheaper.

Instead, jail guards will

raise issues of safety and training. Clarke said getting police involved on a regular basis wasn't possible.

"We can't put undue pressure on the policing community and have other problems arise," he said.

The report was highly critical of some parts of the system.

In regards to processing prisoners, the prison report concluded "volume, confusion and absence of accountability have created a culture of non-compli-

ance."

NDP justice critic Bill Estabrooks called it a "damning indictment of a system that's been badly mismanaged for a long time."

About 10 recommendations have already been completed since the report began in April and another 34 are underway, according to the minister.

But he didn't put a timeline on when any changes would be completed.

Some would need to be worked into next year's budget.

That's too slow for the jail guards' union.

"Our staffing concerns are immediate," said union president Jim Gosse.

"Until they're addressed, there's going to be breakdowns in the system."

Approval

• The settlement still requires court approval in Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan. The Ontario approval hearing is to be heard early next year.

That tone changed yesterday when Maple Leaf settled the class action with

victims of the listeria outbreak, com-

mitting to

pay out be-

tween \$25 million and \$27

million in compensation.

Under the agreement,

victims of listeria-induced

stomach aches stand to

receive potentially thou-

sands of dollars from the

company.

"Our goal throughout this legal process has been to negotiate a fair and early settlement so that we can obtain court approvals

and promptly compensate

families who were affect-

ed," McCain said in a state-

ment.

"This was a tragic expe-

rience and I want to

acknowledge the co-opera-

tion of all the parties

involved to ensure that

people affected receive

timely restitution."

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Environmental OK given for longwall coal mine exploration in Cape Breton

Xtrata Ltd. has been given provincial environmental approval to begin exploring a longwall coal mine near Donkin, Cape Breton. It'll take three years; coal mining will happen in the second and third years, if the company meets environmental conditions. **METRO HALIFAX**

Local



Local eatery in Canada's Top 10

Got a hankering for a really nice steak? Where magazine has voted Cut Steakhouse & Urban Grill on Salter Street, one of Canada's top 10 new restaurants of 2008. Others include Ottawa's Navarra, Nota Bene in Toronto and Olives in Calgary.

METRO HALIFAX

Thief no match for homeowners

JENNIFER TAPLIN
jennifer.taplin@metronews.ca

In this corner: A homeowner wearing blue long johns and socks. His challenger: A potential car thief with a knife.

Ding ding! Dave McBride of Cole Harbour was sitting on his couch reading flyers in a newspaper on Wednesday morning.

"I happened to lift my head up and look, and I saw a man jump into my car," he said.

His wife, Sherry, was getting her shoes on to go to work when her husband swore and ran past her. The couple work at the East Coast Forensic Hospital — Sherry is a nurse, and Dave is a developmental worker.

"He was rifling through the car and I said, 'What are you doing?' and he cursed a bit, then he tried to push past me to get

away."

The two men were evenly matched in size, said McBride, who calls himself a "six-footer-220." But McBride has a couple of cracked ribs from an injury at his job.

"I was afraid he'd start swinging more at me so I grabbed onto him," McBride said.

The two struggled on the lawn, McBride told his wife to call 911.

"His right hand got loose. I didn't see him, but Sherry started screaming that he's going for a knife."

The 47-year-old suspect had a hunting knife in a sheath on his waist. Sherry went for the knife while Dave struggled with the man, but he kicked her away.

That didn't stop Sherry — she waded back into the fray and got a hold of the knife. She threw it in the house where their two dogs, a golden retriever and a black lab, were trying to get out.

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX



Dave McBride stands next to his car in front of his Cole Harbour home on Thursday. McBride fought off a potential car thief and held him until police arrived on Wednesday morning.

er and a black lab, were trying to get out.

"It was kind of a YouTube moment laying there on the front lawn,

blue long johns, white socks and a T-shirt," McBride laughed.

Sherry went to get a neighbour, who helped re-

strained the man until police arrived.

"A couple of the officers said, 'Great job, thanks,'" McBride said.

N.S. has 2nd worst rate of 'accidental releases'

PAUL MCLEOD
paul.mcleod@metronews.ca

CORRECTIONS Nova Scotia's accidentally released twice as many offenders as the national average over the last three years, but at least we're not as bad as New Brunswick.

The findings come from a Deloitte report on Nova Scotia's corrections system that started in April after an inmate escaped from custody during a medical trip.

Over the past year, the system has repeatedly been in the news for accidentally releasing prisoners before they were supposed to be let go.

This has happened to 10 offenders over the past three years. There was an average of 377 people in prison over that time, meaning there were 2.65 accidental releases for every 100 prisoners.

That's more than twice the national average of 1.14 calculated by Deloitte. The firm compared Nova Scotia to B.C., Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

Nova Scotia had the second-worst rate of those provinces, behind only New Brunswick, who far and away lead the pack with more than 4.5 mistaken releases per 100 prisoners.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Movies Showtimes, trailers reviews and purchase tickets at metronews.ca/movies

Video Vancouver police go undercover as seniors to catch violent thieves at metronews.ca/canada

Analysis Politics 2008: From one "dysfunctional" parliament to another at metronews.ca/canada



Mouthguard our idea, say defendants

LAWSUIT Two Truro businessmen being sued over a failed business venture to produce a technologically advanced mouthguard have filed a counterclaim with the Nova Scotia Supreme Court.

In their statement of defence, dentist Anil Makkar and fitness instructor Chuck Sproule say two Halifax businessmen who are suing them were never involved in any material way with the conception, design, development, promotion, marketing or sale

Protection

- The mouthguards sell for about \$2,000 and are currently being used by more than 200 professional athletes.

of the Pure Power Mouthguard.

Makkar and Sproule are the owners of Pure Power Athletics Group Inc. Their mouthguard is designed as a legal performance enhancer, which is said to improve strength and balance by placing the jaw in an op-

timal position.

Halifax businessmen Wayne Banfield and George Thomas have sued for damages and a profit analysis in what they say was a failed joint venture of a partnership. The pair allege Makkar and Sproule wrongly cut off dealings with them by setting up a separate company.

Makkar and Sproule say in their claim, however, that while they did have discussions with Banfield and Thomas to manufacture a prototype, involve-

ment was "on an informal basis with no commitment as to their participation in any future development."

Makkar and Sproule also argue the prototype mouthguard "did not adequately serve the Pure Power initiative and resulted in the breaking and cracking of a few mouthguards while being worn."

Their claim asserts the two sides agreed upon a "mutual parting of the ways." No court date has been set.

HARRY SULLIVAN
/THE TRURO DAILY NEWS

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Joanne Creighton,
SALES MANAGER

There will be a coroner's inquest into the Jan. 12, 2008 van crash near Bathurst, N.B. that killed eight people on their way home from a high-school basketball tournament. Coroners' inquests don't assign blame, but make recommendations to avoid similar accidents in future. METRO HALIFAX

City firefighters red-hot in '08

JENNIFER TAPLIN
jennifer.taplin@metronews.ca

The Mooseheads might not be champions this year, but Halifax's firefighters are dominating their season.

This week firefighters presented their medals and trophies from a year of competitions to Fire Chief Bill Mosher.

"We repeated two (championships) we got last year and that's a hard task to ac-

complish," said Platoon Chief Michael Blackburn.

A Firefighter Combat Challenge national event was held in September in Ontario, but the Halifax team has gone all over the U.S. and Canada to compete.

It involves carrying a hose pack and gear up four flights of a training tower and then going through an obstacle course.

So what's the secret of success of the "Mighty Hal-

ifax" team?

"It's the support of the fire department: They built us a training tower," Blackburn said.

"We're on that course from May to September."

The team is making a very positive name for Halifax on an international stage at an elite level, said Mosher in a statement released yesterday.

"Halifax should be proud of their accomplishments," Mosher said.

the 12 draws of Christmas

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BARRINGTON PLACE SHOPS



Tiana Oliver-Mackinnon, a student at Oxford School, raises her hand to answer a question yesterday. Grade 3 students across the province fared better this year over 2007 in the early elementary mathematics assessment.

N.S. Grade 3 math numbers improve

Assessment scores up by 5 per cent

KAMIA CREELMAN
for Metro Halifax

"Those dollars are starting to pay off."

Education Minister Karen Casey on money put into math

"pencil to paper," Casey said.

Students will play out patterns with a deck of cards before picking the pencil up to work the patterns from memory.

She said it's important students play with concrete as well as mental problems.

Casey said teachers now have access to other teachers who are math experts, available to mentor one-on-one, or demonstrate strategies.

The province also man-

dated that students in grades three to nine must spend at least one hour a day doing math.

It's not fair, Casey said, if "one Johnny has 30 minutes of math a day and across town a luckier Johnny gets 50."

When Casey came to cabinet in 2006, the "Grade 12 math scores were dismal," she said. "Students just didn't have a good foundation."

She said Grade 3 is a good time to evaluate students' math skills because they've been in school long enough to learn, but young enough that the education system can still fix its mistakes before they graduate.

The kids will be reassessed in Grade 6, Casey said.



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The gift of giving

Local campaign supplying goats to Sudan

JENNIFER TAPLIN
jennifer.taplin@metronews.ca



Haligonian Jacob Deng knows the power of a goat: He once sold five of them to pay for boarding school when he was a child.

Deng is one of the former Lost Boys of Sudan, more than 27,000 boys orphaned or displaced during a civil war in the country. He is now studying commerce at Saint Mary's University and raising money to buy goats for returning Sudanese refugees.

"It's the beginning of hope," he said. "A lot of people come back from refugee camps with nothing in their hands, especially young people like me with families."

A goat with a kid means milk and nutrition for the family. Then they can sell the offspring to buy medicine, schooling or use them for meat.

His fourth annual goat campaign just got started since Deng had to focus on his university exams earlier this month.

"We are now up to 300 goats since we started (four years ago)," he said.

He's also raising money to buy schools and his cause got two enormous — and spontaneous — donations last month.

Deng spoke at a professional fundraisers' luncheon last month. There was

A family in Sudan received goats last spring. Jacob Deng is renewing his fundraising campaign to give goats to refugees.

Help for war refugees

- \$50 buys a goat for refugees coming back after 21 years of civil war in Sudan.
- Deng will travel home to Sudan to buy goats locally and distribute them in April.
- Last year, he bought 86 goats. Deng said they wanted to buy more but there was a conflict in the area at the time. Check out www.wadeng.org to donate.

something in his speech that caused Paul McNair to stand up and pledge \$100,000 to Deng's cause, a personal donation spread out over several years.

"My partner and I aren't rich people," McNair said in an interview yesterday.

"We just don't think it's a huge deal to go without one less dinner in a restaurant a month."

Deng said his mouth

hung open at McNair's announcement last month.

"I had the feeling that this wasn't real," Deng said.

"There weren't any dry eyes — every eye was wet in that room."

Then a woman stood up and said she'd like to donate a school from her charity.

"Hah, that was day," Deng said.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

School Review: St. Patrick's-Alexandra

The Halifax Regional School Board is currently conducting a school review of St. Patrick's-Alexandra School, a grade Primary to nine school in Halifax.

In accordance with the *Education Act and Regulations*, an Impact Assessment Report has been prepared looking at potential options regarding the future of the school.

A Study Committee has been formed and responded to the *Impact Assessment Report*.

As part of the process, the school board will hold public meetings to give the public an opportunity to make representations to the Study Committee's response.

The meetings will take place at the following times:

Monday, January 12, 2009, 7 p.m.

St. Patrick's-Alexandra School
2277 Maitland Street, Halifax

(If necessary)

Tuesday, January 13, 2009, 7 p.m.

St. Patrick's-Alexandra School
2277 Maitland Street, Halifax

Members of the public interested in making a representation should contact the Halifax Regional School Board at 464-2000 ext. 2321 or by e-mailing corporatesecretary@hrsb.ns.ca.

Drink prices non-issue: Pictou MLA

BOOZE While an NDP member wants the province to set a minimum drink price at bars to discourage excessive drinking over the holidays, Pictou East MLA Clarrrie MacKinnon doesn't see it as a problem in his riding.

"It's not a serious issue here in Pictou County — I think a lot of establishments don't go as low, price-wise, for the period of time as some of the establishments in Halifax actually do," said Mac-

Kinnon.

Anthony Weatherby, manager at The Thistle in New Glasgow, said price wars at drinking establishments usually don't happen in Pictou County.

"There are definitely price wars in Halifax — I know because I was a student there for five years," he said. "We usually don't do cheap drinks. You can't do dollar drinks — it would cost you \$40 for a forty (ounce bottle of liquor)." METRO HALIFAX

Workplace accident list available to the public

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax

EMPLOYERS Data released by the Workers Compensation Board of Nova Scotia has listed employers and companies with the highest rates of workplace accidents.

Board spokeswoman Mary Kingston said making the data public should encourage employers to improve workplace safety.

The data show that workplace injury levels stayed fairly consistent until 2008, when a new surcharge program was introduced.

The program works like car insurance. Employers pay a fee to the board, and if their level of workplace injury is 200 per cent higher than other firms in the same industry over a certain number of years, they must pay a surcharge. The amount goes up every year the company is on the surcharge list.

About half the companies that had to pay surcharges in 2008 have dropped off the list for 2009, meaning they've had fewer injury claims.

Most of the companies with the highest number of claims are located outside the Halifax area.

Kingston said that the number of injuries can look deceiving on paper if the number of employees a company has is not taken into account.

Clearwater Seafoods' fish processing division will pay a surcharge in 2009; its employees made 634 claims in the last five years. Air Canada employees, in the same period, made 417 injury claims, and the airline will also pay a surcharge.

Doug Hadley, spokesman for the Halifax Regional School Board, says the school board employs around 3,500 people. The data show that 153 injury claims were made by employees in 2007.

"Predominately, the injuries are to backs from lifting things and shoulders. We had some slip and falls," he says.

The school board was not among those paying the surcharge.

Food bank Slam dunk



Halifax Rainmen players Jimmy Twyman, left, and Glen Dandridge load Christmas hampers into a car outside the Parker Street food bank on Thursday. Rainmen players and coaches joined up with other community members to help pack and distribute the hampers.



A copy of the *Impact Assessment Report* and the Study Committee's response can be found on the board's web site at www.hrsb.ns.ca/content/id/1030.html or by contacting the board using the information listed above.

A decision on the school review of St. Patrick's-Alexandra School will be made by the school board no later than March 31, 2009.

The board could decide, among other things, to:

- keep the school open;
- consolidate the school, or a part of the school, with another public school; or
- permanently close the school.

Australian Pink Floyd Show on at Metro Centre What's Pink Floyd without a little lasers and inflatables? The Australian Pink Floyd Show is presenting The Wall for \$45 a ticket at the Metro Centre on Saturday. **METRO HALIFAX**

local 7

Hubley kid to skate alongside all-stars

11-year-old wins weekend trip to Montreal

KAMIA CREEMLAN
for Metro Halifax

Make room, Crosby!
Another homegrown pair of skates has coasted into the all-stars lineup. On Jan. 25, in front of 20,000 fans, Hubley's 11-year-old Michael Anthony will stand on the ice — in an official NHL all-stars uniform — next to his heroes Sidney Crosby and Alexander Ovechkin, and belt out the national anthem.

"I'll yell my hardest," Anthony said. "I'm a good singer, if breaking glass counts."

"I am amazingly, unbelievably, outrageously excited."

Michael Anthony, 11

Anthony, along with 12 other young Canadian players, won the hockey lottery: He was picked in an online draw for an all-expenses-paid weekend with the all-star teams in Montreal, as part of MacDonald's annual In the Lineup program.

"I am amazingly, unbelievably, outrageously excited," Anthony said. "I just flipped out when I heard."

In addition to singing the

anthem with the teams, Anthony gets new gear and an on-ice clinic, and dinner with two NHL all-stars. He also gets the chance to slash sticks and try to check his heroes against the boards in a scrimmage with the teams.

Ovechkin, left-winger for the Washington Capitals. "He's probably the best hitter in the NHL," he said. Anthony's dad Ken thought it was a practical joke when his wife, Bev, called to tell him the news. "Yeah, right," he said, and hung up on her.



Michael Anthony poses in front of the net in his driveway, anticipating Jan. 25, when he'll join the NHL All-Stars on the ice.

He's excited to play with

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Four people die in Saskatchewan fire
Four people died and three were injured in a Wednesday fire in Nipawin, Sask. A six-year-old boy and his twin sister died. A woman, 21, and a man of unknown age also died. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**



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Canada

CSIS listening in

Spy agency monitors calls between suspects and lawyers

Canada's spy service has been listening to telephone conversations between terrorism suspects and their lawyers for the past 18 months as part of a strict monitoring program developed by the government.

The revelation yesterday enraged defence lawyers who argue that intercepting these calls breaches the fundamental right of solicitor-client privilege.

"I feel as though my house was broken into," said Toronto lawyer Barb Jackman. "It's incredibly invasive."

The issue arose in the case of Egyptian refugee Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub, who is accused of conspiring with al-Qaida and has fought the government's attempts to deport him for the past eight years.

Mahjoub's case is one of five under the controversial immigration law known as

"It is a privilege of the highest order and protected at the highest levels. It is a principle of fundamental justice itself."

Marlys Edwardh, lawyer

"national security certificates."

In April 2007, Mahjoub was released on stringent bail conditions after seven years in custody. Mahjoub's lawyers recently became concerned that their calls were also being monitored and pressed for answers.

On Wednesday, a senior agent with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service testified in a secret Ottawa hearing that the agency was monitoring calls on behalf of the Canadian Border Services Agency.

Justice Carolyn Layden-Stevenson released a two-page public summary of the testimony this morning in a Toronto courtroom. It noted that calls to lawyers are

monitored, "to the extent of being satisfied that the communication does not involve a potential breach of the terms of release or a threat to national security."

"It is a privilege of the highest order and protected at the highest levels," said Jackman's co-counsel, Toronto lawyer Marlys Edwardh, regarding communication between lawyers and their clients. "It is a principle of fundamental justice itself."

Edwardh said she cannot continue with the case until lawyers' calls are no longer monitored and planned to ask Justice Layden-Stevenson for an order on Friday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quebec Cabinet strikes gender equality



MATHIEU BELANGER/REUTERS

Quebec Premier Jean Charest, centre, stands up after posing with his newly appointed cabinet at the National Assembly in Quebec City on Thursday. Half of the 26 cabinet ministers are women.

News in brief

HEALTH Health Canada urged parents Thursday not to give over-the-counter cold medicines to children under the age of six, citing concern over misuse and overdoses. Labels will be mandatory next year.

VANCOUVER Police have gone undercover in the city's Downtown Eastside posing as seniors to halt robberies of

older men in the area. Muggings have decreased 59 per cent since the project began two months ago.

BABIES A one-time set of steroid injections for pregnant women at risk of giving birth prematurely can head off major problems for the baby, but more injections give no benefit, Canadian researchers said.

Federal deficit could hit \$30B

ECONOMY Prime Minister Stephen Harper plans a stimulus package to rescue the economy that will drive the federal budget deficit to between \$20 billion and \$30 billion next year, according to a senior government official. The spending would include a bailout package for struggling automakers.

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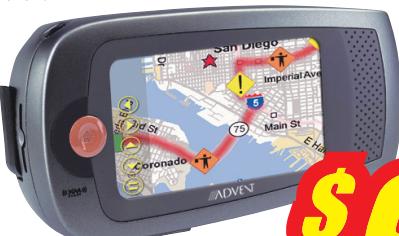


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EU farm ministers overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to lift Europe's 11-year ban on U.S. poultry imports despite strict conditions designed to ensure consumer safety. A dispute over chlorine-washed chickens has soured the European Union's relations with the United States, its largest trading partner, since the EU embargo was imposed in 1997. **REUTERS**

World

Liberals slam Russian laws

Russian liberals have appealed to President Dmitry Medvedev to veto a set of new laws they say could lead to purges reminiscent of the Stalin era.

The government has submitted to parliament, which is dominated by the pro-Kremlin United Russia party, a bill that broadens the interpretation of treason and espionage to include "acts against the constitutional order."

Opponents say this could open the door to arbitrary trials against dissenters at home, whereas the narrower definition was used exclusively to describe cooperation with foreign intelligence services.

Parliament also adopted a law under which a single Russian human-rights campaigners have accused former president Vladimir Putin of backtracking on democratic reforms and turning Russia into a police state.

REUTERS

"Dozens of people could be jailed or evicted."

Letter to the Novaya Gazeta newspaper judge, rather than a jury, will decide in trials of treason, espionage, terrorism, hostage-taking, mutinies, sabotage and civil unrest.

"Dozens of innocent people could be jailed or evicted," leading liberals said in a letter in the independent Novaya Gazeta paper.

Russian human-rights campaigners have accused former president Vladimir Putin of backtracking on democratic reforms and turning Russia into a police state.

REUTERS



Breakfast eaters healthier

Breakfast may be the most important meal of the day — as long as that meal is not a doughnut, according to a new study. In a survey of U.S. adults, researchers found that people who ate lower-calorie foods for breakfast tended to have a better diet overall. Men who ate a healthy breakfast generally weighed less. Among women, breakfast eaters — regardless of the food involved — tended to weigh less.

REUTERS

Paris Demanding release of political prisoners



Singer Jane Birkin speaks as, from left, Tina Kieffer, editor of French women's magazine Marie-Claire, and director Yamina Benguigui listen at a protest Thursday in Paris. They are demanding the freedom of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

Keep ties with Russia, Bush urges

POLITICS Preparing to leave office, U.S. President George W. Bush yesterday advised his successor to try to stay friends with Russia despite disagreements.

"There's common interest and there's going to be a lot of tensions," Bush said. "The president has got to be in a position where he can deal with those tensions in a way that doesn't send chilling signals with other allies."

Bush famously said after meeting former president Vladimir Putin in 2001 that he trusted the Russian leader after gaining a "sense of his soul." Putin, who is now prime minister but still thought to effectively run the country, later clashed with Bush on several issues.

REUTERS

News in brief

INDIA The government rushed a new law through parliament Thursday that will allow police to hold suspects for up to 180 days without charge, a move

legal officials said is an attempt to allay public anger over the Mumbai attacks. India's lower house of parliament unanimously passed the

bill on Wednesday, as well as one to create a national police agency similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States.

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Inquiry admits attack flawed

GEORGIA A Georgian parliamentary inquiry has said the military conduct during its August conflict with Russia was flawed, but backed President Mikheil Saakashvili's attack on the breakaway South Ossetia region.

The report echoed domestic criticism of the military performance in the five-day war, in which the Russian army drove Georgian security forces from pro-Moscow South Ossetia and advanced to within 45 kilometres of the capital Tbilisi.

REUTERS

Illinois won't foot legal bill

The top legal officer in Illinois told Gov. Rod Blagojevich on Thursday the state will not pay for his defence against charges he tried to sell president-elect Barack Obama's vacated U.S. Senate seat.

The Democratic governor had piled up significant legal bills from a five-year federal investigation even before being charged last week with conspiring to bribe and commit fraud in a scheme to swap political favours, including the choice of Obama's replacement, for cash, jobs or other considerations.

Distraction

- The scandal has been a distraction for Obama and his team as he announces cabinet choices and lays out plans for dealing with the recession and other crises once he becomes president Jan. 20.

Federal prosecutors may also try to freeze the governor's \$3-million US-plus campaign fund so he cannot use it for his defence, Blagojevich's lawyer Edward Genson said.

Through his lawyers the

two-term governor, 52, has denied any wrongdoing and refused to resign.

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan issued a letter signed by her chief of staff, telling Genson the state will not pay to defend Blagojevich against either the criminal charges or the impeachment inquiry now in its third day in the state legislature. Genson had said the reimbursement was warranted because the charges and the impeachment probe were triggered by things that happened in the course of carrying out official business.

REUTERS

Bill Clinton donor list revealed

CHARITY The governments of Saudi Arabia and Norway and billionaires Bill Gates and Haim Saban are among the biggest donors to former U.S. president Bill Clinton's foundation, a list released yesterday showed.

Clinton made public the names of about 200,000 contributors to his foundation.

The two largest donors, each listed as giving more than \$25 million US, were the Children's Investment Fund Foundation, a London-based charity, and UNITAID, the UN drug purchase facility fighting AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Other donors included Saudi Arabia and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

REUTERS

News in brief

MIDDLE EAST The door is open for direct talks between Israel and Syria and a peace deal between the two longtime foes is

achievable, outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Thursday.

REUTERS

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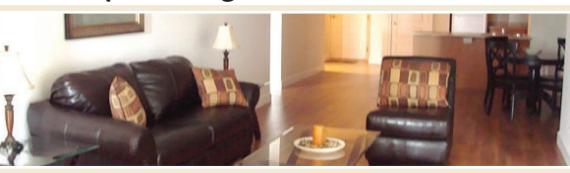
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Tip of the Day: A wise man can see more from the bottom of a well than a fool can from a mountain top. – Unknown

War-crimes tribunal seeks another suspect

The UN war-crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia hopes Bosnian Serb Ratko Mladic can be caught in time to put him on trial with his old political leader Radovan Karadzic, the chief prosecutor said Thursday. **REUTERS**

Iraq most deadly for journalists

FATALITIES Iraq remained the deadliest country for journalists in 2008 for the sixth consecutive year with 11 journalists killed, according to an annual analysis by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

All those killed this year were local reporters working for domestic news outlets. That was down from a record 32 deaths in Iraq in each of the prior two years, according to the group. Worldwide, 41 journalists were killed this year in connection to their work.

REUTERS

Castro offers prisoner swap

Cuban President Raul Castro proposed yesterday a swap of prisoners with the United States as a goodwill "gesture" to pave the way for talks with incoming U.S. president Barack Obama.

His offer to release political dissidents in exchange for the release of five convicted Cuban spies in U.S. prisons was the most specific proposal yet to ease ties with the United States since Obama, who takes office Jan. 20, was elected.

Castro's comments are likely to fuel growing expectations in Latin Ameri-

A better deal for Cuba

- On Tuesday, 33 Latin American and Caribbean leaders urged Obama to lift the embargo on Cuba as soon as he takes office. They also demanded the immediate lifting of measures taken in the past five years by President George W. Bush to toughen the embargo against Cuba, where Fidel Castro seized power in 1959.

ca that the Obama administration will help thaw U.S.-Cuba ties that have been frozen since Washington imposed an economic embargo in 1962.

"Let's do gesture for gesture," Castro told reporters in Brazil.

"These prisoners you

talk about — they want us to let them go? They should tell us tomorrow. We'll send them with their families and everything. Give us back our five heroes. That is a gesture on both parts," he said, referring to the convicted Cuban spies.

REUTERS

Bush 'impressed' with Obama

POLITICS President George W. Bush said yesterday he would not be second-guessing Barack Obama's decisions after he hands over the White House keys next month.

"Bush would not reveal what he and Obama discussed at their private Oval Office meeting after the November election, but said, "I was impressed by

the questions he asked."

"And I've told him I wouldn't reveal them so that if he ever asked for my advice again, he would feel comfortable doing it, knowing that it wouldn't be out there for public consumption," Bush said at a question-and-answer session hosted by the American Enterprise Institute.

REUTERS

News in brief

MADOFF CASE Marc Litt, assistant U.S. attorney, has been named the federal prosecutor in the Bernard Madoff case af-

ter the money manager's arrest last Thursday for securities fraud.

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Comment & Views

Comment

Trapped in a mid-century nightmare

OmniVision

Rick McGinnis

Suburbia has been, for three generations at least, the social equivalent of pork rinds or supermarket tabloids — something no one has a good word for, though it continues to exist, even thrive, in

spite of blanket condemnation by those who "know better."

Moviegoers are getting a chance to revisit this spacious, tree-lined hell this Christmas with the release of Revolutionary Road, the Oscar favourite that reunites Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio, and allows director Sam Mendes to take another swing at the same target he savaged almost a decade ago with American Beauty.

Based on Richard Yates' 1961 novel, it's the story of the Wheelers, Frank and

April, who have somehow managed to take up residence in that epicentre of middle-class despair — the post-war, northeastern commuter suburb — while presuming themselves much better than the "hopeless emptiness" they see everywhere. Or not — there wouldn't be much of a story if they didn't realize, with a shock, that they've become trapped in that most awful of mid-century nightmares (in mid-century novels, at least): Material comfort and routine.

Yates' book was one of the first to define the conventional wisdom on suburbs, a viewpoint voiced almost entirely by people who don't live there, and echoed vociferously by the young people who claim to have "escaped" them — an image that requires us to equate freeways with barbed-wire fences, and malls with guard towers.

In the conventional wisdom, the greatest threat posed by suburbs is that they have the temerity to grow, or "sprawl," in urban studies jargon, which sums

up the paradox of the suburban problem: That people actually want to live in these terrible places, no matter how many novels, movies, magazine articles or learned studies condemn them.

It requires that we look at suburbs as places that never change, or that their essence is frozen in the mid-century form described by Yates and others — an eternal Levittown, where the saplings never turn into trees, and no one ever puts a skate ramp in the pool or builds a grow-

op in the rec room.

In his zeal to reprise his suburb-bashing, Mendes was probably blind to how his tragedy would actually play. Most people will probably watch Revolutionary Road and envy Frank and April's cute home with its very collectible period furnishings and the woods across the road and wonder if they could move in tomorrow, hopeless emptiness be damned.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

Views

Fage's power of political kryptonite strong as ever

UrbanCompass

Paul McLeod

Oh, Rodney MacDonald, what did you do to Ernie Fage in a past life?

Back in the day, Fage had to be involved in potato-based scandals or flee the scene of a car crash to embarrass the government. Not anymore. Now his mere existence somehow manages to make the Mac-

Donald Tories look bad.

This week, the NDP says it stumbled into a patronage-appointment scheme when Finance Minister Michael Baker accidentally called NDP MLA John MacDonell to ask about an "appointment for Ernie."

Baker meant to call the other John MacDonell, the chief of staff to Defence Minister Peter MacKay. Whoops. But Baker says he was only asking about a project on behalf of Fage.

We'll never know for sure what was said. Maybe the Tories are right, and if you want to get a project funded in your area, all

you have to do is call your MLA. Who will call the finance minister. Who — while on vacation — will call the defence minister's chief of staff. Who will call the defence minister. Who will fund your project.

Piece o' cake.

Then again, the provincial Tories are prepping for a sure-to-be fierce election. Fage plans to run again in his riding as an independent. It would certainly be a kick in the premier's teeth if Fage caused the Tories to lose a valuable seat.

If only there were some way to convince him not to run. Some sort of high-pay-

ing position he could be "appointed" to.

And, at that moment, the stars aligned and Stephen Harper decided he would appoint 18 new senators. Because of its geographical mandate, three of those senators have to be from Nova Scotia.

But hey, this is all just speculation. The premier doesn't deny members of his government have been talking with the feds about Senate appointments. He does deny pushing for a Senator Fage. If Fage ever was up for consideration, he sure isn't any more.

All we really know for

sure is that Ernie Fage was sent to this earth to torment Rodney MacDonald.

Though he isn't even in the PC party anymore, his powers of political kryptonite seem to be as strong as ever. And to think, the opposition almost had to go a full year without the government getting linked to something reckless and embarrassing.

Then there was that one wrong number. That's what I call a Christmas miracle.

Paul McLeod is a staff reporter at Metro Halifax. He is currently in rehab for being a political junkie. It's going badly.



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Chrysler not pulling out of NASCAR

Chrysler says it will not abandon its involvement in the NASCAR racing circuit, but will reduce spending by about one-third. **REUTERS**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Auto parts' profit drops \$1B, lowest in 10 years

Profits at Canadian auto parts makers are expected to drop by 38 per cent to about \$1 billion in 2008, the lowest level in nearly a decade, the Conference Board of Canada said yesterday.

The board's outlook is based on an 18 per cent drop in production by automakers as demand for cars and trucks falls.

"Canadian auto parts manufacturers continue to see their production con-

tracts slashed because of weaker demand for new vehicles in the United States," said Sabrina Browarski, an economist at the Conference Board, in a note.

"However, massive cost-cutting of more than C\$4 billion will enable the auto parts industry as a whole to stay in the black this year." The board said further declines in profit levels are expected in 2009.

The industry shed 12,800

jobs in 2007, and the board expects another 10,800 jobs to be cut in 2008 and 2009 combined. **REUTERS**

The good news

- An anticipated recovery in U.S. demand beginning in 2010 would allow for an eventual rebound in auto parts production, the board said.

Business in brief

OIL A combination of declining oil prices, lower crude demand and production cuts will cost OPEC another \$151 billion in

lost oil export revenue next year, the U.S. government's top energy forecasting agency said yesterday.

MARKETS U.S. crude prices dropped more than nine per cent to \$36 a barrel yesterday. **REUTERS**



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Brian Burke told a Vancouver newspaper Thursday that he was upset he was not invited to Trevor Linden's jersey retirement ceremony Wednesday. Burke was the Canucks assistant GM when Linden was drafted in 1988, and was GM while Linden played there for several seasons. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports



Whitt, Morneau in for WBC

Ernie Whitt, left, will manage Canada's team at next year's World Baseball Classic, while Minnesota Twins all-star first baseman Justin Morneau has been named the squad's first player. The March 5-23 World Baseball Classic will be played in several cities around the world, including Toronto. Canada opens play March 7 against the U.S. at Rogers Centre.

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Philadelphia Flyers' Glen Metropolit collides with Canadiens goalie Jaroslav Halak Thursday night. Montreal won 5-2.

Habs knock off Flyers

NHL ROUNDUP

CANADIENS 5, FLYERS 2

Sergei Kostitsyn, Steve Begin and Guillaume Latendresse each posted a goal and an assist as the Montreal Canadiens knocked off the Philadelphia Flyers 5-2 at the Bell Centre.

Alex Kovalev and Matt D'Agostini also lit the lamp for the Canadiens, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Robert Lang recorded two assists, while Jaroslav Halak made 29 saves.

Arron Asham registered a goal and an assist for the Flyers, who had won five games in a row, one shy of their season-high.

BRUINS 8, LEAFS 5

David Krejci netted his first career hat trick and Phil Kessel continued his amazing points streak with two goals and an assist as Boston beat Toronto 8-5, securing its 12th straight home win.

Marc Savard added a goal and three assists for the Bruins, who won for the eighth time in nine games to move their record to 22-5-4, tops in the Eastern Conference. Their current home win streak is the longest since

a 16-game run during the 1975-76 season.

Alexei Ponikarovsky, Nik Antropov, Mikhail Grabovski, Jason Blake and Pavel Kubina scored for Toronto.

PENS 6, THRASHERS 3

Evgeni Malkin finished with two goals and two assists as the Pittsburgh Penguins doubled the Atlanta Thrashers 6-3 at Philips Arena.

Jordan Staal, Matt Cooke, Philippe Boucher and Miroslav Satan each scored once for the Penguins, who won for just the second time in the past six games.

Bryan Little, Marty Reasoner and Colby Armstrong tallied a goal apiece for the Thrashers.

Cole Harbour's Sidney Crosby chalked up two assists.

WINGS 6, SHARKS 0

Pavel Datsyuk collected two goals two helpers and Ty Conklin stopped all 24 San Jose shots as the Detroit Red Wings handed the Sharks their first regulation loss since Nov. 9 in convincing fashion, 6-0 at Joe Louis Arena.

Marian Hossa had a goal and an assist for Detroit.

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Sundin picks
Vancouver

JEFF HODSON
Metro Canada



NHL Mats Sundin is the newest member of the Vancouver Canucks, general manager Mike Gillis announced Thursday afternoon. The 37-year-old free agent centre was signed to a one-year, pro-rated \$10-million deal, according to media reports.

"I am truly excited to be joining the Canucks," Sundin said in a statement. "Once I made the decision to return to play a few weeks ago, the Vancouver opportunity was simply the best overall fit."

Sundin, who is at his home in Sweden for Christmas, will be in Vancouver Dec. 27.

There is no timeline for him to enter the lineup, Gillis said, and he will be treated like any other player returning from injury or absence.

SCOREBOARD

QMJHL

STANDINGS					
ATLANTIC DIVISION					
	W	L	OL	PTS	
Moncton	25	3	5	55	
Cape Breton	24	11	2	50	
Saint John	20	15	3	43	
Bathurst	14	16	7	35	
P.E.I.	12	18	8	32	
HALIFAX	10	23	2	22	

TONIGHT'S GAMES
HALIFAX at Cape Breton
Saint John at Acadie-Bathurst
Lewiston at Moncton
Rimouski at Quebec
Chicoutimi at Baie-Comeau
P.E.I. at Drummondville
Montreal at Gatineau
Rouyn-Noranda at Val-d'Or
Shawinigan at Victoriaville

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Boston 8 Toronto 5
Montreal 5 Philadelphia 2
Carolina 2 Florida 1 (OT)
Colorado 2 Tampa Bay 1 (SO)
Detroit 6 San Jose 0
Pittsburgh 6 Atlanta 3
Washington 4 St. Louis 2
Phoenix 2 Nashville 1
Columbus at Dallas

NFL

YESTERDAY'S RESULT
Indianapolis 31, Jacksonville 24

Olympic snowboarder Sarah Conrad of Dartmouth will stop by her home hill of Martock near Windsor on Dec. 30. Conrad will run a freestyle snowboard camp for riders aged 10 and older. Call 425-5450, ext. 370, if you want to sign up. **METRO HALIFAX**

Conrad to hold freestyle snowboard camp Dec. 30

Let the games begin

Rainmen hit the road to begin PBL pre-season schedule

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca



All aboard!

The Halifax Rainmen will load up a couple vans Saturday at 10 a.m. and head to Quebec City for their first Premier Basketball League exhibition game on Sunday.

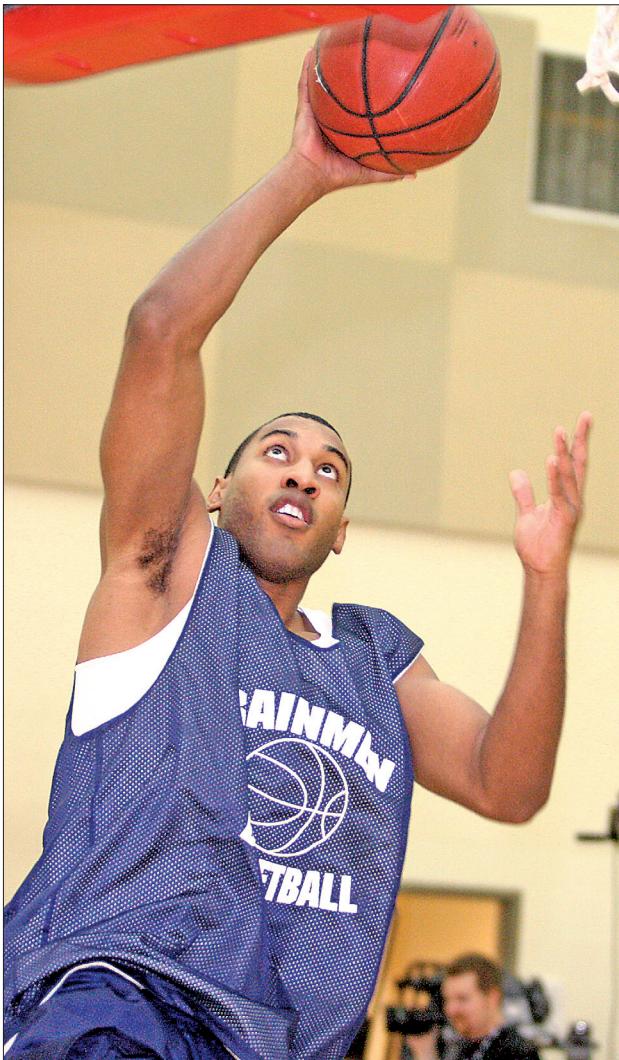
It's an all-too-familiar 1,000-kilometre, 10-hour haul for Cordell Jeanty, a newcomer to the Rainmen.

"Oh man," groaned Jeanty, who travelled to play the Rainmen last season as a member of the American Basketball Association's Montreal Royal. "It's never fun. That trip alone takes a lot out of you, but it's something you've got to do."

Travel aside, the Rainmen are stoked about playing an actual game for the first time since training camp opened on Dec. 2. An intra-squad contest last Saturday hardly counts, nor do the harsh conditioning drills of coach Rick Lewis.

Jeanty, a 6-foot-5 forward, will face one of his former teams, the Quebec City Kebs, on Sunday. He played for the Kebs, then the Kebekwa, in 2006-07, before joining the Montreal Royals in 2007-08. He was an ABA all-star both years.

He said the Rainmen,



Halifax forward Cordell Jeanty is looking forward to showing the rest of the PBL that the Rainmen are for real this season.

who didn't do much damage with an 11-20 record last season, want to "make a statement."

Jeanty said some of his

former Kebs teammates, such as former Laval Rouge et Or all-Canadian Charles Fortier, have no idea what kind of team the

Did you know?

- Cordell Jeanty is not related to Osvaldo Jeanty, a perennial MVP who won five straight titles with the Carleton Ravens at the Final 8 Canadian Interuniversity Sport men's basketball championship in Halifax from 2003-07.

Rainmen have assembled.

"We want to go in and let teams know we're for real, and that we're not the Halifax Rainmen from last season, for the teams that already know us," said the 29-year-old Toronto native. "We're here to win a championship."

The Rainmen return home next week and play four straight exhibition games from Dec. 26 to 29 at The Tower. While the Rainmen are overflowing with players that would have been all-star calibre in last year's ABA, the pre-season games are pivotal for the individuals to mesh as a team.

So far, so good, according to Jeanty.

"Man, we couldn't ask for a (better) group of guys — everybody is getting along," Jeanty said.

"We all have to buy into the coach's system, and so far it looks like we're doing that. If we keep pushing, we'll get better every day."

Local scout Matheson dies at age 55

MATTHEW WUEST

matthew.wuest@metronews.ca



Longtime hockey scout Donnie Matheson died in his sleep at his Dartmouth home early Thursday. He was 55.

Matheson, who was an original member of the Halifax Mooseheads' management staff, most recently served as an NHL scout **Matheson** with the Boston Bruins and as the director of recruiting for the QMJHL's Moncton Wildcats.



"We are deeply shocked at this tragic news," Wildcats general manager Bill Schurman said in a release. "We've lost a great friend and supporter. The hockey world is saddened."

Added fellow colleague and former NHL coach Ted Nolan: "I will cherish the memory of Donnie's laughter."

Matheson, a Glace Bay native who moved to Dartmouth in 1974, began scouting in his 20s with the QMJHL's Sherbrooke Beavers, before shifting to the Ontario Hockey League with Belleville and Sault Ste. Marie.

Matheson was hired as chief scout of the Mooseheads when the franchise was founded in 1994.

Sports in brief

PROSPECTS Former Halifax Mooseheads first-rounder David Gilbert and Cape Breton Screaming Eagles goalie Olivier Roy will play in the Canadian Hockey League Top Prospects Game. The CHL announced the rosters Thursday for the annual event, scheduled for Jan. 13 in Oshawa, Ont. **METRO HALIFAX**

Mooseheads travel to Sydney for Round 5 of Battle of Nova Scotia

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca



The Halifax Mooseheads will look to strike back when the Battle of Nova Scotia resumes Friday night in Sydney.

The Mooseheads face the

Cape Breton Screaming Eagles at 7 p.m. at Centre 200, looking for their first victory against their provincial rivals this season.

Cape Breton has wiped out Halifax with four wins in four games, with a combined scoring edge of 18-9.

Mooseheads rookie Math-

ieu Corbeil is expected to make his fourth consecutive start in goal as veteran Mark Yetman rests a mild groin injury. Corbeil, 17, has allowed 16 goals on 90 shots in three losses with Yetman on the shelf.

Eric Louis-Seize (shoulder) is expected to return to

the lineup, while Matt Boland (shoulder) won't play.

The Mooseheads have lost four straight. This is their final game before a seven-day holiday break. They are four points out of the QMJHL basement with a 10-23-2 record.

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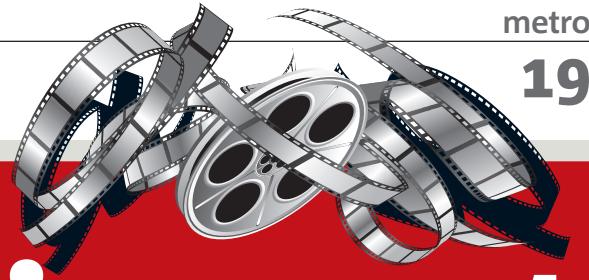
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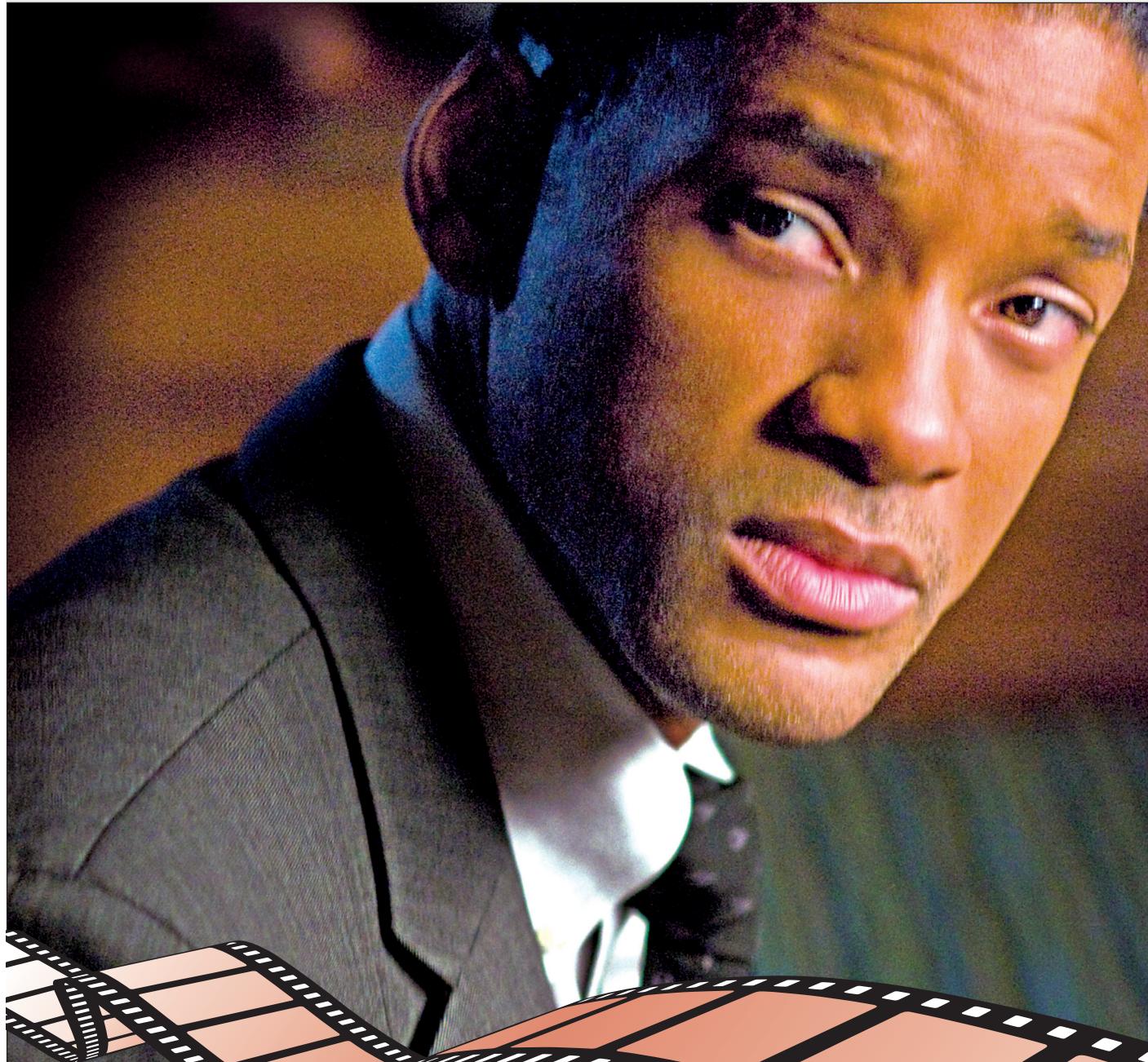
Movies&Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

A new man

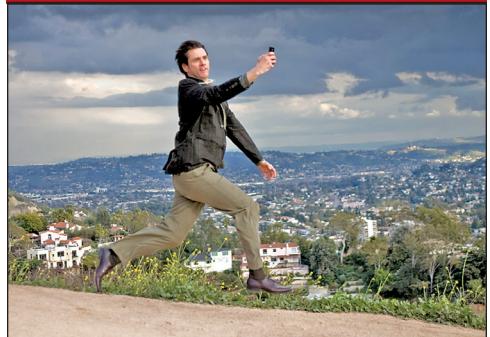
Pg 20



Will Smith's character is armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture — these are the hallmarks of the traumatized man he plays in the new drama *Seven Pounds*. Smith's committed to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters.

movie

Pg 21



Yes Man shows Carrey back at humble, funny roots.

music

Pg 24



Fall Out Boy, no strangers to celebrity, are fighting back.

7th heaven

Pg 28



Scarlett Johansson makes our hot list for this week.

“POSITIVELY HILARIOUS!”

-Bonnie Laufer, **TRIBUTE TV**

JIM CARREY YES MAN



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Movies

●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Seven Pounds weighs on viewers

Seven Pounds

Director: Gabriele Muccino
Stars: Will Smith, Rosario Dawson
Classification: 14A
Rating: ●●

ROBERT ABELE
 for Metro Canada

It's an unusual sight, Will Smith looking uncomfortable in his own skin, armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture.

These are the hallmarks of the traumatized character he plays in the new drama *Seven Pounds* — and as committed as the box office star is to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters, the movie around him is something of an overly manipulative, good-for-you slog.

Smith stars as Ben Thomas, a man in full-on suffering from the emotional after-effects of a traumatic incident, the details of which the movie



Will Smith stars in the drama *Seven Pounds*.

keeps hidden till the end, but aren't hard to ascertain.

Spurred to seek redemption, he takes it upon himself to intrude upon and help the lives of seven carefully chosen people, including a hospitalized boy, a blind call centre worker (Woody Harrelson), and a beautiful cardiac patient (Rosario Dawson).

Dawson's character, an artisan typesetter with a bum heart and financial problems, naturally becomes the unsuspecting catalyst to Ben's accepting love in his austere determined life.

Rather than lay all their cards on the table as to what Ben is up to, screenwriter Grant Nieporte and director Gabriele Muccino

traffic in ersatz suspense, keeping the nature of Ben's sacrificial charity mission secret so that the love story carries maximum tearjerk power when it reaches its twist ending.

It's an audience game that diverts our energies away from the human emotions, though.

And unfortunately, the big reveal is no surprise, and even comes off as faintly ludicrous and bizarre, something for an episode of *Ripley's Believe It or Not* rather than a touching drama of two souls — each with a different version of a broken heart — finding each other.

It's all especially dispiriting considering how well Smith and director Muccino worked on their previous collaboration, the emotionally tense and genuinely uplifting *The Pursuit of Happyness*. Smith and Dawson are fine actors, but they're trapped in a movie in which they're more pawns than people.

Doubt leads SAG nominations

AWARDS Film drama *Doubt* led all nominees for Screen Actors Guild awards yesterday with five nominations overall, including for best ensemble cast, even as talk of a possible strike cast a cloud over the awards.

Joining *Doubt*, about a Catholic priest and nun engaged in a battle of wits over charges of sexual abuse, in the race for best ensemble cast were *Milk*, about slain gay rights leader Harvey Milk, and *The Curious Case of Ben-*

jamin Button, which tells of a man who ages backward. Those movies each earned three SAG award nods.

Slumdog Millionaire, a tale of romance and money set in India, and *Frost/Nixon*, which recounts the interviews of disgraced former U.S. president Richard Nixon by British TV host David Frost, also saw their actors land in the race for best ensemble cast and pulled down two nominations apiece.

REUTERS

SAG nominees

- Actor: Richard Jenkins, *The Visitor*; Frank Langella, *Frost/Nixon*; Sean Penn, *Milk*; Brad Pitt, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*; Mickey Rourke, *The Wrestler*.
- Actress: Anne Hathaway, *Rachel Getting Married*; Angelina Jolie, *Changeling*; Melissa Leo, *Frozen River*; Meryl Streep, *Doubt*; Kate Winslet, *Revolutionary Road*.
- Supporting actress: Amy Adams, *Doubt*; Penelope Cruz, *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*; Viola Davis, *Doubt*; Taraji P. Henson, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*; Kate Winslet, *The Reader*.
- Cast: *Doubt*, *Frost/Nixon*, *Milk*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.
- Stunt ensemble: *The Dark Knight*, *Hellboy II: The Golden Army*, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, *Wanted*.

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Ford to appear in comedy

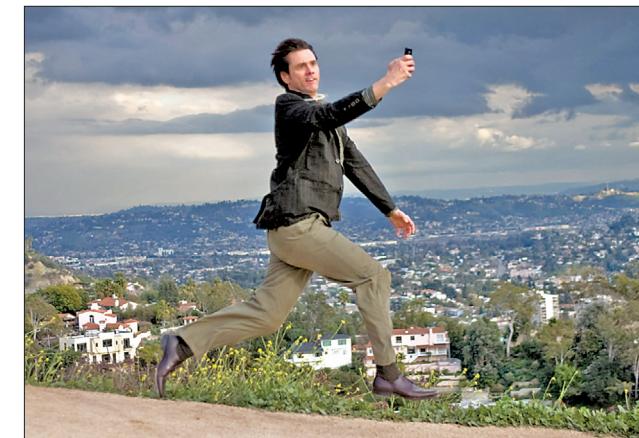
Harrison Ford is taking a break from fighting bad guys and saving the world to try his hand in a comedic role. The 66-year-old actor has signed on to the film *Morning Glory*, the Hollywood Reporter says. MSN.COM

Carrey agreeable in comedy Yes Man

Yes Man

Director: Peyton Reed
Stars: Jim Carrey, Zooey Deschanel
Classification: PG
Rating: 

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



Jim Carrey is a man who decides to only say "yes" in Yes Man.

cally wallow in his misery.

After being convinced by a self-help guru to "make a covenant" and say yes to everything, he suddenly finds a world of opportunity — for better or worse.

For Carrey the character, that means taking up an online mail-order bride, attending a Harry Potter-themed party, plowing back Red Bulls all night and falling for a free-spirited musician (Zooey Deschanel).

For Carrey the actor, it means getting to re-ex-

plore both his famed physical stuntwork — like slipping on a drink (which actually earned him three broken ribs) and the more subtle side that charmed audiences in films like *The Truman Show*.

Sometimes it works, sometimes not, but the truth is, this comedy has a lot of heart in spite of its formulaic conclusion.

The film is undeniably the most honest effort we've seen from Carrey in a while. Perhaps this Yes Man has a few tricks up his sleeve yet.

Classic story gets new tail

The Tale of Despereaux

Director: Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen
Stars: Matthew Broderick, Emma Watson
Classification: G
Rating: 

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

The Tale Of Despereaux is a classically told fairy tale that relishes the conventions and limitations of its genre.

The story feels almost old fashioned in the earnestness of its style and message, but in a weird way that's what elevates it over the ever-growing pile of CGI children's films clogging theatres. This is hardly the most original movie of its kind, but it is oddly refreshing to see a movie like this told without a shred of irony.

Matthew Broderick lends his instantly recognizable voice to the titular char-

acter of Despereaux, a mouse with massive ears and an inflated sense of courage who dreams of adventure and heroism.

While the rest of the mice who live hidden in a medieval castle lead an insular life in fear of humans, Despereaux ventures out of his community to save a dying kingdom. Like I said, pretty standard stuff, but the screenplay by Gary Ross is so tightly constructed and filled with gentle humor that the intended audience won't notice. It's undoubtedly Ross' contribution that made this potentially clichéd sto-



Matthew Broderick provides the voice of Despereaux.

work.

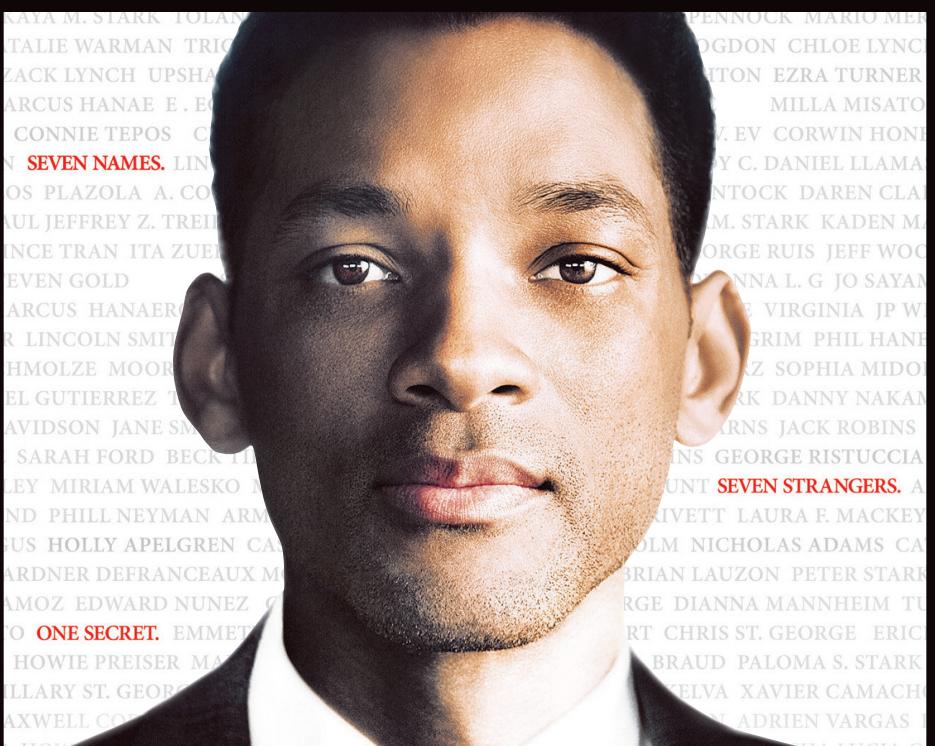
Ross has made a career out of writing gentle fantasies like *Big*, *Seabiscuit*, and *Pleasantville* that make traditional storytelling, plots, and messages feel alive and new. His script is brought to life admirably by the directing team of Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen, who use their many years of experience in animation to create a technical marvel that doesn't quite match the triumphs of Pixar, but comes damn close.

As is expected, the voice cast is filled with recognizable actors, but rather than simply casting stars the film uses talented actors like Dustin Hoffman, Emma Watson, and William H. Macy to play characters who are actually suited to their talents.

Make no mistake, this is a very simple movie offering simple pleasures.

But in a time when most children's entertainment is struggling to seem cynical, edgy, and hip, *The Tale Of Despereaux* offers an unexpected breath of fresh air.

EXPERIENCE THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

WILL SMITH SEVEN POUNDS

COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH RELATIVITY MEDIA AN OVERBROOK ENTERTAINMENT ESCAPE ARTISTS PRODUCTION A FILM BY GABRIELE MUCCINO "SEVEN POUNDS" ROSARIO DAWSON MICHAEL EALY WITH BARRY PEPPER AND WOODY HARRELSON MUSIC: VANGELIS MILLI PROPS: DAVID CROCKETT DAVID BLOOMFIELD KEN STOVITZ DOMENICO PROACCI STYLING: GRANT KIEPPIER

14+ ESCAPE PROPS: TODD BLACK JAMES LASITER JASON BLUMENTHAL STEVE TSCHI WILL SMITH MUSIC: GABRIELE MUCCINO COLUMBIA PICTURES

SevenPounds-movie.ca Soundtrack on Varèse Sarabande



SevenPounds-movie.ca

Check Theatre Directory or SonyPicturesReleasing.ca for Locations and Showtimes

STARTS TODAY

Delgo took home a big prize last weekend. The animated movie voiced by Freddie Prinze Jr., Jennifer Love Hewitt, and Val Kilmer had the poorest opening weekend ever. The movie only made \$511,920 US, according to Box Office Mojo. EONLINE.COM

Writer pleased Valkyrie finally found its wings

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



FEATURE Christopher McQuarrie is as shocked as anyone that Valkyrie found its wings. In fact, the award-winning filmmaker — mostly regarded for writing The Usual Suspects — never even expected his latest movie to get off the ground.

"Scripts like this, I write them and put them in a drawer," admitted McQuarrie — who also co-produced Valkyrie — during a recent phone interview.

The true story of an inside assassination plot against Adolf Hitler in 1944, Valkyrie is definitely the sort of film Hollywood generally shuns like the plague. So what inspired the scribe to script a story he assumed wasn't sellable?

"The thing that really amazed me was that the assassination itself was not the end of the story," said McQuarrie. "Once you've killed Hitler, you've only just started and now what you have to do is take over his government."



Tom Cruise stars in Valkyrie.

"The challenge of history is not how it ends, it's how to give that ending meaning...what these men did and the sacrifices they made ultimately brings this movie to what I feel is a really satisfying conclusion."

Lucky for McQuarrie, his Usual Suspects director Bryan Singer (who also helmed X-Men and Superman Returns) shared that sentiment. Throw in Tom Cruise — who plays Stauffenberg, the fascinating mind behind the assassination plot — and there was no looking back for McQuarrie and Valkyrie.

Valkyrie opens Christmas day across Canada.

Where there's a Will people

InFocus

Richard Crouse

mrchaos33@hotmail.com

Will Smith is the world's biggest movie star. Nobody can touch him. Cruise jumped on the couch, Clooney's movies don't make any money and Hanks appears to be in semi-retirement. Only Johnny Depp comes close and he is a distant second.

Last year Big Willie took home \$80 million and became the first actor to have eight consecutive movies break the \$100 million mark at the box office, but despite all that success a couple of key qualifiers have eluded his grasp.

His home is probably beautiful, but no movie star abode is complete without an Oscar or Golden Globe on the mantle. Cruise has three Globes, Clooney an Oscar and Tom



Will Smith has won acclaim, but he still hasn't earned an Oscar.

Hanks could start a petting zoo with all his Academy Awards.

Smith has none but it's not for lack of trying.

He's best known for playing cops and agents but in his first big screen role, Six Degrees of Separation, he played a gay con man who claims to be the son of Sidney Poitier. The movie earned an Oscar nod for co-star Stockard Channing but nothing for Will's risky performance.

He says the movie taught him to be totally committed to his roles, adding that he now regrets taking Denzel Washington's advice not to kiss a man on-screen.

"It was very immature on my part," he says. "I was thinking, 'What are my friends in Philly going to think about this?' This was a valuable lesson for me. Either you do it or you don't."

In subsequent films, the ones that made him a star, he developed the tools that came to define his on-screen persona; the cocky tilt of the head and hipster charm. Those tricks won over audiences but don't win awards.

Then along came a pair of films that put him on the serious-actor-grid, The Legend of Bagger Vance and Ali. Bagger Vance earned poor reviews and

even worse box office, but the Michael Mann film about the legendary fighter gave Smith his first Oscar bait lead role.

For the next few years he seemed content to rule the box office, but two collaborations with Italian director Gabriele Muccino — The Pursuit of Happyness and Seven Pounds, in theatres today — have brought him closer to the award's circle.

"Gabriele Muccino," Smith says, "is able to help me create characters that are much different from what I would do on my own."

Pundits called their first collaboration Pursuit of an Oscar Nomination and you can almost sense him groping for the award in Seven Pounds, but I fear he doesn't stand a chance this year against Sean Penn, Mickey Rourke and Frank Langella.

He may just have to settle for world domination and leave the awards for the poor folks.

Richard Crouse is the author of *Son of the 100 Best Movies You've Never Seen* and film critic for CTV's Canada AM.

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Screen Times

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 19 TO THURS., DEC. 25. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

For reviews of *Bedtime Stories*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *The Spirit* and *Valkyrie* pick up the Wed., Dec. 24 issue of Metro.

HALIFAX

BAVERS LAKE
190 Chain Lake Dr., Bayers Lake
902-876-4800

Australia (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 9 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 9

Bedtime Stories (G) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7:30

Bolt (G) Dolby Stereo Fri-Tue 1:30-7:20 Dolby Stereo Wed 1:30 Dolby Stereo Thu 7:40

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (STC) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 6:50-6:55-9:30-9:45

The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Tue 12:40-1:25-3:20-4:05-6:40-7:15-9:45-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Wed 12:40-1:05-3:20-3:35 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 7:15-10:05

Four Christmases (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:50-1:30-3:10-4-6:40-7:10-9:10-9:25 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:20-12:50-3:20-3:40 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7:9:40

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:30-4-6:45 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:10-3:40 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 6:45

Marley & Me (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 6:50-9:30

Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:4-7:9-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:15-3:30

Punisher: War Zone (18) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:05-3:45-7:20-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:05-3:45

Quantum of Solace (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:45-1:15-3:30-3:50-6:45-7:15-9:30-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:40-12:45-3:15-3:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7:9:50

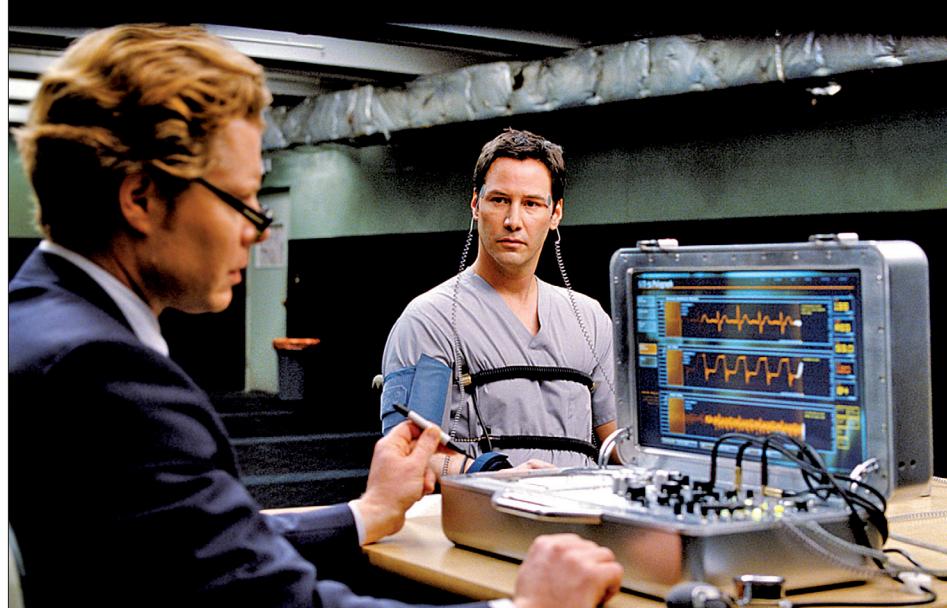
Role Models (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Sat 1:10-3:40-6:55-9:45 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Sun-Mon 1:10-3:40-9:45 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Tue 1:10-3:40-7:20-9:45 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:10-3:40

Seven Pounds (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Tue 12:45-3:30-7:15-10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Wed 12:45-3:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 6:50-10

The Spirit (STC) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7:05-10

The Tale of Despereaux (G) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:35-6:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:35-6:30-9:30

Transporter 3 (14) Dolby Stereo Fri-Tue 1:20-4:10-6:50-9:15 Dolby Stereo Wed



Klaatu (Keanu Reeves) prepares to turn the tables on a polygraph operator (David Richmond-Peck) in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, which is currently in theatres.

12:30-3:20

Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:30-12:40-3:30-3:45-6:30-6:45-9:15-9:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:05-12:30-3:05-3:15 Dolby Stereo Thu 6:50-9:50

Valkyrie (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7:15-10

Yes Man (PG) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:25-4:15-7:30-9:55 Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Wed 1:35 Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7:15-9:55

IMAX
190 Chain Lake Dr., Bayers Lake
902-876-4800

The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:30-4:05-6:45-9:30 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:40-3:25 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 6:55-9:45

OXFORD THEATRE
6408 Quinpool Rd.
902-423-7488

Listings not available at press time.

PARK LANE
5657 Spring Garden Rd.
902-423-4860

Bedtime Stories (G) Dolby Stereo, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7:10-9:40

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (STC) No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7:30

The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri 1:30-4:20-6:50-9:20 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Sat-Sun 1:20-4:10-6:30-9:10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Mon-Tue 1:20-4:10-6:30-9:10 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:20-4:10

Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:50-3:10-7:9:15 Stadium Seating Wed 12:50-3:10

Marley & Me (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 6:45-9:20

Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Stadium Seating Sat 1

Milk (14) Stadium Seating Fri 12:20-1-3:20-4-6:20-9:20-9:50 Stadium Seating Sat 1:4-6:20-9:20-9:50 Stadium Seating Sun-Tue 12:20-1:3-20-4-6:20-9:20-9:50 Stadium Seating Wed 12:20-1:3-20 Stadium Seating Thu 6:20-9:10

Valkyrie (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri 1:30-4:20-7:20-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Sun-Tue 1:30-4:20-7:20-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:30-4:20

Quantum of Solace (14) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri 1:30-4:20-7:20-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Sat 2:0-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Sun-Tue 1:30-4:20-7:20-9:55 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 1:30-4:20

Seven Pounds (14) No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:40-3-6:40-9:30 No Passes, Stadium Seating Wed 12:40-3:30 No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7:9:50

The Spirit (STC) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Thu 7:20-10

Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:30-3:15-6:45-9:35 Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating Wed 12:30-3:15

Valkyrie (PG) Stadium Seating Thu 6:40-9:30

Yes Man (PG) No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:10-3:40-7:10-9:40 No Passes, Stadium Seating Wed 1:10-3:40-9:40 No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 6:30-9

LOWER SACKVILLE
760 Sackville Dr., Downsview Plaza
902-869-2022

Bedtime Stories (G) Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 12:45-3:10-7:15-9:45

Bolt (G) Stadium Seating Fri 7:15-9:35 Stadium Seating Sat-Wed 1:3-15-7:15-9:35

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (STC) Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 12:30-4:7:30

The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri 7:9:25 No Passes, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 12:30-3:10-7:9:25 Stadium Seating Mon-Wed 12:30-3:10-7:9:25 Stadium Seating Thu

12:30-4:7:30

Four Christmases (PG) No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri 12:50-3:10-7:9:15 Stadium Seating Wed 12:50-3:10

Marley & Me (PG) Dolby Stereo, Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 6:45-9:20

Transporter 3 (14) Dolby Stereo Fri-Tue 1:20-4:10-6:50-9:15 Dolby Stereo Wed

9:25

Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating Fri 7:10-9:40 Stadium Seating Sat-Wed 12:30-3:30-7:10-9:40

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Stadium Seating Fri 6:50-9:50 Stadium Seating Sat-Wed 1:3-15-6:50-9:50

Marley & Me (PG) Stadium Seating Thu 1:3-40-7:9:40

Seven Pounds (14) Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri 6:45-9:30 Stadium Seating, No Passes Sat-Sun 12:50-3:35-6:45-9:30

The Tale of Despereaux (G) Stadium Seating Fri 6:30-8:50 Stadium Seating Sat-Wed 12:45-3:6:30-8:50 Stadium Seating Thu 12:45-3:6:30

Valkyrie (PG) Stadium Seating Thu 1:10-3:50-6:50-9:30

Yes Man (PG) Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri 6:40-9:15 Stadium Seating, No Passes Sat-Sun 1:15-3:45-6:40-9:15

Quantum of Solace (14) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Fri-Tue 12:40-3:20-6:35-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Wed

12:40-3:20

Seven Pounds (14) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 12:30-3:25-6:30-9:35 No Passes, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 6:30-9:30

The Spirit (STC) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri 6:35-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1:20-3:20-6:30-9:30

Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri 2:40-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 2:40-3:20-6:30-9:30

Yes Man (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri 6:40-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1:15-3:45-6:40-9:15

Quantum of Solace (14) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Fri-Tue 12:40-3:20-6:35-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Wed

12:40-3:20

Seven Pounds (14) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 12:30-3:25-6:30-9:35 No Passes, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 6:30-9:30

The Tale of Despereaux (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri 6:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1:20-3:20-6:30-9:30

Four Christmases (PG) Stereo Fri 6:50-9 Stereo Sat-Tue 2:20-6:50-9 Stereo Wed 2:20-6:50-9

Marley & Me (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 6:55-9:30

Yes Man (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri 6:40-9:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Sat-Sun 1:15-3:45-6:40-9:15

Quantum of Solace (14) Stereo Fri-Tue 6:35-9 Stereo Thu 6:40-9

The Spirit (STC) Stereo Thu 6:55-9:30

The Tale of Despereaux (G) Stereo Fri 6:55-9:05 Stereo Sat-Tue 2:30-6:55-9:05 Stereo Wed 2:30 Stereo Thu 6:50-9:05

Twilight (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 6:30-9:05 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Tue 2:6:30-9:05 Dolby Stereo Digital Wed 2 Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 6:30-9:05

Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 6:45-9:30

Seven Pounds (14) No Passes Fri 6:30-9:20 No Passes Sat-Tue 2:6:30-9:20 No Passes Wed 2:30-9:20

The Spirit (STC) Thu 6:55-9:25

The Tale of Despereaux (G) Fri 7:15-9:15 Sat 2:30-7:9:15 Wed 2:30-7:9:15

Twilight (PG) Fri 6:45-9:30 Sat 2:15-6:45-9:30 Sun 9:30 Mon-Tue 2:15-6:45-9:30 Wed 2:15

Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri 6:50-9:35 No Passes Sat-Tue 2:10-6:50-9:35 No Passes Wed 2:10 No Passes Thu 6:50-9:35

CINESTAR/TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

Valkyrie (PG) Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 6:35-9:10

DARTMOUTH CROSSING
145 Shubie Dr., Dartmouth Crossing
902-481-3251

Australia (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:30-4-7:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 2

Bedtime Stories (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Thu 7-9:30

Bolt (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Fri-Wed 12:50-3:15-7:9:20

Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 2-4:20-7:25-9:40 Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 7:05-9



The bestselling albums at Amazon.ca
1. And Winter Came, Enya; **2.** A Winter Symphony, Sarah Brightman; **3.** Sugar Mountain: Live At Canterbury House 1968, Neil Young, left; **4.** Day And Age, The Killers; **5.** Soul, Seal. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Music

A falling out with celebrity

BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
for Metro Canada



So it's no surprise that their new album, Folie a Deux, is all about celebrity excess.

"This record is strongly influenced by Hollywood," says lead singer Patrick Stump. "It's about watching western culture deal with fame and how we've deluded everything to the point of just product."

If anyone knows a thing or two about celebrity culture it's Fall Out Boy. The Chicago-turned-L.A. pop punk band doesn't just live near Hollywood, they live the whole Paparazzi eluding, party hopping experience.

Rallying against the nature of celebrity, is somewhat ironic coming from a band who counts Pete Wentz, a gossip rag favourite, as a member. The bassist has had a complicated relationship with fame. From his genitals being plastered all over the Internet to a widely publicized marriage with Ashley Simpson,

he's no stranger — and in turn the rest of the band — to the Hollywood machine.

Stump's well aware that some might think it's odd for the group to take such a staunch stand against pop culture, but he doesn't think it's strange. "It's really easy to not be inside it even if you are inside of it," he explains. "There are two different people who end up in tabloids, people who are there by accident and people who are desperate to maintain their popularity. We've all been part of the former."

As for Wentz, Stump makes no apologies for his bassist's celebrity status. But he vehemently points out that he's no fame whore. "It's very frustrating," he says. "He does wonderful things because of it. We've all been able to contribute to organizations we strongly believe in, we committed a lot of money to Proposition 8, and we almost made it to



UNIVERSAL MUSIC PHOTO

Folie a Deux is the new album from Fall Out Boy.

Antarctica to bring Green Peace there. We got to do them because we're utilizing celebrity. That's the way Pete sees it, we can get something out of fame."

The album's themes don't just manifest themselves in the lyrics, the music — a blend of high energy '80s rock and their familiar punk

riffs — is also a response to America's obsession with celebrity. Stump explains that the '80s are back and "in the worst possible way."

"We've fallen into Wall Street excess. Cocaine is back in fashion and everyone is full of crap," he says. "That's what I wanted the album to sound like."

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Tuning out the holiday cheer

SoundCheck



Alan Cross

alan@ongoinghistory.com

If you're anything like me, you're close to ODing on Christmas music treacle. I tried to get some shopping done the other day, but after hearing Jose Feliciano sing Feliz Navidad yet again, I realized that I'd rather blowtorch my own toes off than be subjected to more of the same dusty holiday music that's been making the rounds since Coca-Cola invented Santa Claus in the '20s.

With that in mind, here's

another list of decidedly non-traditional holiday songs that rock:

- **Police Nabbed My Dad/Bobnoxious:** This London, Ont., group have been sending me Christmas songs for the last couple of years and I've loved 'em all. Nothing like a song about your dad being sent to jail set to the tune of the aforementioned Feliz Navidad. Get it at bobnoxiousrock.com.
- **Santa Claus Is Coming to Town/BWC Christmas Orchestra:** If you liked Springsteen's take on this one, you might want to stay away from the near death-metal vocals of this version. Available on: BWC Studios Presents: A Very Metal Christmas.
- **Joseph, Better You Than Me/Killers feat. Elton John:** When I spoke to Brandon Flowers last month about their third Christmas single, guitarist Dave Keuning was in another suite in Toronto's Pantages hotel laying down the final guitar tracks. Brandon says that Joseph doesn't get the credit he should for his role in the Christmas sto-
- **Oh Little Town of Deathleham/Killdozer:** Definitely not the kind of thing you'll want to play when grandma comes over for Christmas dinner. A bit dysfunctional, to put it mildly. Available on: Hardcore Holiday

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at ongoinghistory.com and exploremusic.com.

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Swift tops the charts

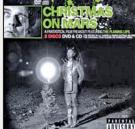
Teen country star Taylor Swift reclaimed her crown on the U.S. pop album charts this week. Swift's second release, *Fearless*, rose one place to the top after selling 249,000 copies during the week ended Dec. 14. **REUTERS**

**Metro recommends****• AMADOU & MARIAM, WELCOME TO MALI:**

African couple deftly blends their musical roots with a myriad of modern styles for a superb new and original sound.

**• THE FLAMING LIPS, CHRISTMAS ON MARS:**

Film score mixes ominous electronic soundscapes and fanciful strings for a healthy dose of engaging weirdness.

**• WE WISH YOU A METAL XMAS AND A**

HEADBANGING NEW YEAR: Old-school rockers blast through boring holiday standards with a metal energy that's both ferocious and fun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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Matt Lanter is the next newbie to arrive on 90210's West Beverly campus. The actor will play Liam, a bad boy who's ready to rile up the hallways, People reports. IMDB.COM

Television

Cartoon metal heads flourish

IntelleVision



Rick McGinnis

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

BRUTAL: I can no longer give a convincing impression of someone whose world has been transformed by Jay Leno on primetime, and there's only so much I can say about Canadian Idol's

yearlong "rest" without bursting into this disturbing giggle, so I thought I'd take a moment to talk about the second season of my favorite show, now on DVD just in time for Christmas.

You don't have to have grown up in a working class suburb in the '70s to love heavy metal, but it certainly helps, and as far as I can tell, metal fans generally love Metalocalypse, even though it viciously satirizes everything they hold dear. If

you haven't managed to catch its brief appearances on Teletoon's adult-only Detour programming block, the premise is simple enough — Dethklok is the biggest band in the world, growing from the 13th to the seventh-largest economy in the world over the course of the show's two seasons. Try to imagine, say, that Slayer or Cannibal Corpse could cause international riots, or prompt debates at the United Nations.

The band — a mix of American and Scandinavian louts — are morons, and when they aren't endlessly debating how to do the most metal thing, they're unsuccessfully dealing with their intimacy issues, or the fact that they're lousy at doing anything that doesn't involve double-kick triplets or singing about flesh-eating zombies.

Not that the world needed such a thing, but Metalocalypse is probably the most perfect take on met-

al's essence — morbid and epic megalomaniac teenage-boy fantasies alongside tawdry, lower-middle-class anxieties, executed with plenty of metal's graphic flourishes: skulls and swords and bat's wings, and

"Metalocalypse is probably the most perfect take on metal's essence — morbid and epic megalomaniac teenage-boy fantasies alongside tawdry, lower-middle-class anxieties."

Season

two follows where season one left off — with the band staggering one step closer to the Armageddon predicted in the show's title, and the shadowy conspirators of The Tribunal monitoring them for their own vague reasons. And then there's the band, with their pitiful solo projects, family problems and momentary obsessions with hallucinogenic

drugs known only to Amazon tribes, which inspires a brief tribute to Werner Herzog's 1982 film Fitzcar-

aldo. The show is at its best when little or nothing is going on but the sorts of

digestive, numb-skull conversations most men have had a few hundreds of in their lives, enlivened by a few mo-

ments of incredibly graphic violence.

Basically, it's like spending a night in front of an Xbox with a bunch of boys — teenage or older — ungoverned by female influences, if only for a few precious hours.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

In brief

REALITY TV Former Beatle Paul McCartney and pop star Britney Spears are at the top of Simon Cowell's celebrity wish list as possible mentors on the upcoming season of American Idol.

But the chances of getting McCartney to appear on the most-watched American television show seem slim.

"We try every year to get Paul McCartney on but for whatever reason he won't come on," the British judge told reporters on a conference call.



REUTERS

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt



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4 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARD NOMINATIONS
BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

BEST DIRECTOR STEPHEN Daldry BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS KATE WINSLET BEST SCREENPLAY DAVID HARE

— NEW YORK TIMES

— CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, ROGER EBERT

— CRITICS' CHOICE AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING

3 BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS — KATE WINSLET

— NBC REEL TALK, JEFFREY LION

— ONE OF THE BEST PICTURES OF THE YEAR! — CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, ROGER EBERT

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— ONE OF THE BEST PICTURES OF THE YEAR! — NBC REEL TALK, JEFFREY

Star Trek actress dies

Actress Majel Barrett Roddenberry, the widow of Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry and a member of the show's cast, died on Thursday at the age of 76. **REUTERS**

Youth watching less TV: Study

Young Americans just aren't watching TV like they used to.

Put another way, the older you get, the more you watch, according to a report out Thursday from Deloitte indicating that "millennials," the generation of ages 14-25, watch just 10.5 hours of TV a week. That compares with 15.1 hours for those in Generation X (ages 26-42), 19.2 hours for baby boomers (43-61) and 21.5 hours for matures (62-75).

Lest one assume millennials are shunning broadcast and cable in favour of

(Young people) spend less time watching DVDs of movies and TV shows on television sets ... than do Gen Xers.

Deloitte study

watching DVDs on their TV screens, they're not. They spend less time watching DVDs of movies and TV shows on television sets, 4.8 hours a week, than do Gen Xers. They are,

though, spending more time watching DVDs on a computer — 1.9 hours a week — than any other age group.

But while millennials watch the least TV, they spend the most time with media in general, making that up with video games, music and the Internet.

TV does remain the most influential advertising medium going, according to the Deloitte study, titled The State of the Media Democracy. It is followed by magazines, the Internet, newspapers, radio and billboards.

REUTERS



A Deloitte study has found that the older you are, the more likely you are to watch TV.

New U2 album out in March

MUSIC Irish rockers U2 have named their new album *No Line On The Horizon*, and will release it worldwide in early March, their label said Thursday.

The quartet's 12th studio album was originally expected to be released by the end of this year, but the band announced in September that it would keep writing more tunes. Recording took place in

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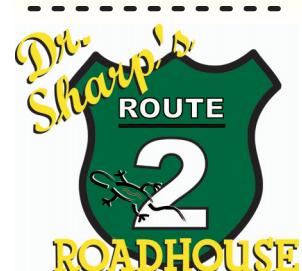
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FRIDAY

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
31	31	31	ABC	News (N)	ABC Wld News	Inside Edition	Chronicle	Wife Swap		Supernanny		20/20
7	7	7	ASN	The Road to Avonlea	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Wife Swap			Don't Forget the Lyrics!		Stargate SG-1
11	11	11	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Secret of the Nutcracker (DVS)			Little Mosque	CBC News: The National		The Hour
32	32	32	CBS	News (N)	Evening News	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Ghost Whisperer (N)		NUMB3RS "Tabu"		NUMB3RS (N)
6	6	6	CIHF	Entertainment	ET Canada	90210 (HDTV)		NUMB3RS "Frienemies"		Life "Trapdoor" (N)		News (N)
9	9	9	CJCH	etalk (N)	Hollywood	Rita MacNeil's Christmas		Eight Days to Live (2006, Drama) Kelly Rowan. (DVS)		News (N)		
36	36	36	FOX	Deal-No Deal	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		Don't Forget the Lyrics!		Fox First
12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	Momma's Boys		Dateline NBC		
55	55	55	SCOR	Hockey Talk	Game On	World Cup of Poker		WWE SmackDown!				Score Tonight
53	53	53	TSN	Off the Record	SportsCentre	Junior Hockey: IIHF World Championship Pre-Competition				SportsCentre		Curling
16	16	16	A&E	Cold Case Files		CSI: Miami (HDTV)		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami "Game Over"		CSI: Miami
70	70	70	APTN	News		Mixed Blessing	First Nation	Rabbit Fall	The Rez	Top Gun *** (1986, Adventure) Tom Cruise.		
37	37	37	BRVO	Street Legal		Desperate Housewives	Bravo! Fact	Books-Film		Richard III *** (1996, Drama)		
49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Laughs	Good Morning	Corner Gas	Rick Mercer	The Simpsons	South Park	Comedy Inc.
18	18	18	CNN	(5) The Situation Room		Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live		Cooper 360
38	38	38	DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Daily Planet (N)		Tornado Rampage		Man vs. Wild (N)		Alcatraz; Hell
34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes		House Hunters	Property Virgin	House Hunters	Extreme Home	Build a New Life		Relocation
46	46	46	HIST	Ultimate Engineering		NCIS "Boxed In"		Shockwave		Ultimate Engineering		Ax Men
17	17	17	MM	Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Brooke Knows	Brooke Knows	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	Raising Helen (2004, Comedy-Drama)		
206	206	206	PIX	(6) The Star Chamber		Chain Reaction ** (1996, Action) Keanu Reeves.				Johnny Mnemonic (1995, Science Fiction)		
39	39	39	SHOW	EastEnders	Little Britain	The Best Years (DVS)		The Guard "Live Free"		Testees	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams
40	40	40	SLICE	X-Weighted "Michelle"		Crash Test Mommy	In Laws	Nearly Dead		Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Hair Challenge
21	21	21	TLC	What Not to Wear		Real Simple. Real Life	What Not to Wear			What Not to Wear		Say Yes-Dress
22	22	22	W	(6) Holiday Wishes (2006)		Friends	Will & Grace	Grocery Bag	Maxed Out	Crazy for Christmas (2005, Drama)		
27	27	27	YTV	Powerpuff Girls: Fight		Christmas With the Kranks ** (2004, Comedy)				Smallville "Fracture"		Dark Oracle

SATURDAY

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
31	31	31	ABC	News (N)	Wrld News Sat	Patriots All-Access		I Want a Dog-Charlie Brown		Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat (2003, Comedy)		
7	7	7	ASN	Mozart Decoded (DVS)		Magic Flute Diaries (2008, Musical) Rutger Hauer. (DVS)		Hope for the Future (N)		Atlantis		
11	11	11	CBC	Sat. Report	Hockey Night	NHL Hockey	Toronto Maple Leafs at Pittsburgh Penguins. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey
32	32	32	CBS	News (N)	CBS News	Entertainment Tonight		Elf *** (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, Bob Newhart.		48 Hr. Mystery		
6	6	6	CIHF	Santa Claus Parade		Doc		Painkiller Jane		Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
9	9	9	CJCH	Conversation-Prime Minister		Playing House (2006, Romance-Comedy) (DVS)				Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
36	36	36	FOX	Friends	Friends	Kodak's Smart	Colon Detox	Cops	Cops	America's Most Wanted		Fox First
12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Access Hollywood (N)		Crusoe (HDTV) (N)		WWE Tribute to the Troops (N)		Law/Ord SVU
55	55	55	SCOR	College Football: St. Petersburg Bowl				Score on NFL	NBA Basketball	Toronto Raptors at San Antonio Spurs.		
53	53	53	TSN	Curling 2008 Continental Cup - Singles. (Live)					NFL Football	Baltimore Ravens at Dallas Cowboys. (HDTV) (Live)		
16	16	16	A&E	Cold Case Files (HDTV)		CSI: Miami (HDTV)		CSI: Miami (HDTV)		The Sopranos		
70	70	70	APTN	Tribal Treks	Music Speaks	MYTV	The Mix	Rez Bluez "West Coast Bluez"		Movie		
37	37	37	BRVO	Arts & Minds	Bravo!Videos	Barekaked for the Holidays		Rankin Sisters		Yo-Yo Ma-Making of Songs of Joy & Peace		
49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comics	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	Blue Collar TV	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham
18	18	18	CNN	This Week in Politics		Lou Dobbs This Week (HDTV)		Special Investigations		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley
38	38	38	DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Mighty Ships		Canada's Worst Driver		Criss Angel
34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes		Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Sarah's House	Mansions	Million Dollar Listing		Extreme-Home
46	46	46	HIST	In Search of Santa Claus		NCIS "Silver War"		Ancestors	Ancestors	Gangs of New York *** (2002)		
17	17	17	MM	You Can Dance		Raising Helen ** (2004, Comedy-Drama) Kate Hudson.				Get With Girlicious (N)		Britney
206	206	206	PIX	(6:50) 54 ** (1998, Drama)		Stand by Me (1986, Comedy-Drama)				Rules of Engagement ** (2000, Drama)		
39	39	39	SHOW	TBA	Trailer Park	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	His and Her Christmas (2005, Comedy-Drama) Paula Devicq.		Sin City		
40	40	40	SLICE	Beautiful	Mr. Friday	Last 10	Last 10	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Inside Hollywood		Housewives
21	21	21	TLC	Jon & Kate Plus 8		Little People	Little People	Crazy Christmas Lights		More Crazy Christmas Lights		Trading
22	22	22	W	Shopping Bags	Shopping Bags	The Road to Christmas (2006, Comedy) Jennifer Grey.				Miracle on 34th Street (1947, Fantasy)		
27	27	27	YTV	Red-Nosed Reindeer		The Christmas That Almost Didn't Happen				National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie		

SUNDAY

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00

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Going Out

Mix of Six

HOT & HAPPENING
WEEKEND EVENTS

The Sons of Maxwell

Friday at 8 p.m., Casino Nova Scotia.

The Sons of Maxwell — otherwise known as Don and Dave Carroll — will play their annual Christmas concert Friday at Casino Nova Scotia. Don't celebrate Christmas? Never fear — there'll be Sons of Maxwell favourites and songs from each brother's solo work, too. Tickets are \$25 at www.ticketatlantic.com.

John Gracie's Simply Christmas

Saturday, Casino Nova Scotia, 6 p.m.

It's a family affair this year at John Gracie's Simply Christmas concert. The Halifax-based singer/songwriter, who started penning lyrics before he started school, will bring his 18-year-old daughter Samantha onstage. Samantha Gracie is also featured on her dad's national release, *Baby It's Cold Outside*. The concert will be at the Schooner Room at Casino Nova Scotia; tickets are \$25 each at the casino, or www.ticketatlantic.com.

The Barra MacNeils

Sunday at The Rebecca Cohn, 4 and 8 p.m.

Harp music, Gaelic carols, step dancing: It wouldn't be a Nova Scotia Christmas without the Barra MacNeils' annual concert. This year, they're playing a Sunday matinee at 4 p.m. and an evening show Sunday night, 8 p.m. at the Rebecca Cohn. Tickets are \$36, and they're on sale by phone at 494-3820 or at www.dal.ca/artscentre.

Hanukkah

Monday, Dec. 22 at 6 p.m. Grande Parade, outside City Hall.

Happy Hanukkah! The eight-day Jewish festival, also known as the Festival of Lights, begins Dec. 21. Halifax will celebrate Dec. 22 at 6 p.m., when Jewish celebrants will gather to light the menorah in the Grand Parade, outside City Hall. Afterward, there'll be treats.

Dear Santa

At The Eastern Front Theatre until Dec. 28.

If you're more into theatre than music, Eastern Front Theatre's Dear Santa is playing until Dec. 28. Regular-price tickets are just over \$30; it's about \$16 for students and \$25 for military. Tickets are available at www.ticketpro.ca.

LEGO Halifax Harbour Exhibit

At the Maritime Museum of The Atlantic until Feb. 8.

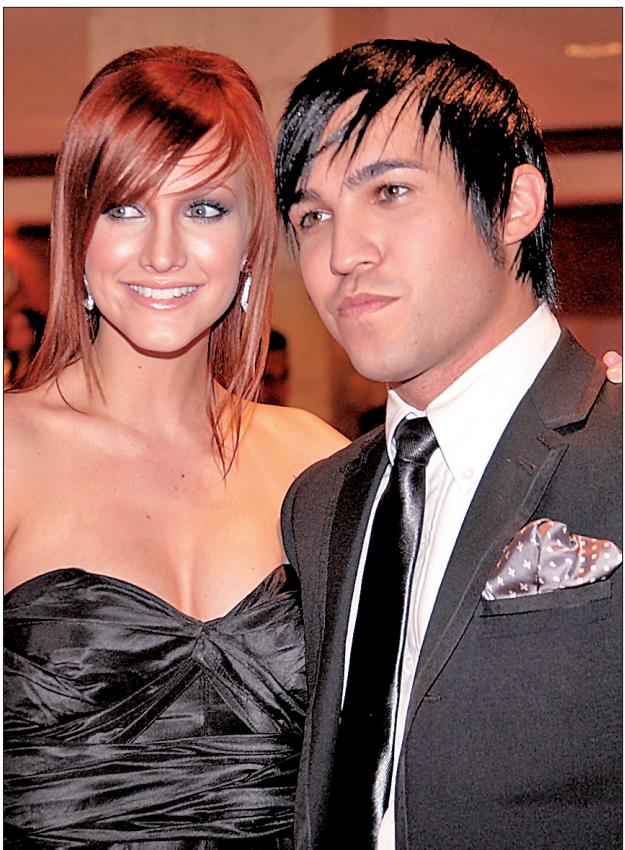
Check out the popular LEGO Halifax Harbour exhibit at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on Lower Water Street. It's a huge, interactive model train and town. Admission is \$4.75 for adults, \$2.75 for kids aged six to 17. Children five and under get in free.

Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now



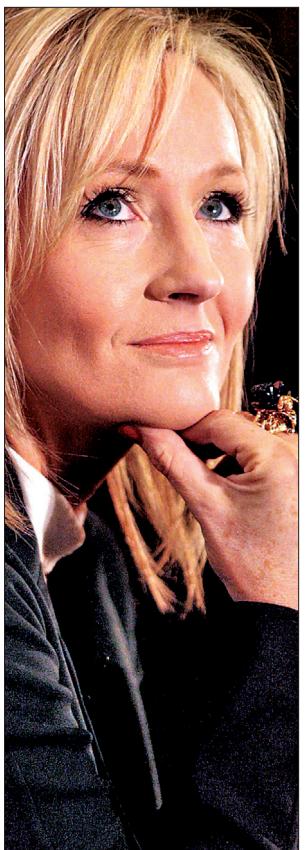
1 Cruising around

Actor Tom Cruise is back in the spotlight again, this time plugging his Second World War thriller *Valkyrie*, which hits theatres Christmas Day.



2 Oh, baby

Bronx Mowgli, the name of singer Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz's son, has been crowned the worst celebrity baby name of 2008. About 5,000 visitors to BabyNames.com voted the moniker the most disliked male baby name of 2008. Jagger Joseph Blue — the daughter of actress Soleil Moon Frye and Jason Goldberg — was deemed the worst girl's name.



3 Back at the top

Harry Potter series author J.K. Rowling is back on top with *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, currently the No. 1 best-seller on Amazon.ca.



4 Awards season

Movie awards season is well underway, with Golden Globe nominees recently announced, and several film critics' associations having named their top films of the year. Oscar nominations will be announced Jan. 22.



5 Geek chic

Large glasses, long socks and checked shirts have been spotted on the likes of pop star Madonna and Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz, heralding a fashion trend to take fashionistas by storm next year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

6 Another celebrity designer?

Katy Perry may start a fashion line, E! News Online reports. The singer says she's always experimented with clothes and cites model Agyness Deyn and burlesque star Dita Von Teese as her fashion icons.

7 Scarlett exposure

Actress Scarlett Johansson has been all over the place lately, first co-hosting the Nobel Peace Concert Dec. 11, then slamming *Cosmopolitan* U.K. magazine for printing an interview with her she says she never gave, and now comes news she's thinking about putting out another album.

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- CTV Studio
- FRED Salon Café & Gallery
- Little Fish
- NS Sport Hall of Fame
- Ryan Duffy's
- Snu Bar

Visit: www.blinddatewithastar.ca
for more event information!

Piven quits Broadway after doctors' diagnosis

Leading man Jeremy Piven has suddenly split from the critical and commercial hit Broadway revival of David Mamet's Speed-the-Plow, citing doctors' diagnosis that he's suffering a high mercury count, Variety reports. [PEOPLE.COM](http://people.com)

**Celebrity Buzz****Inauguration tops Scarlett's wish list**

PEOPLE Scarlett Johansson stopped by The Tonight Show with Jay Leno this week and told Jay what she's asking Santa for this Christmas.

The 24-year-old actress, who is an outspoken Barack Obama supporter, expressed her desire to attend the Inaugural Ball, femalefirst.com reports.

"From Santa I would like a ticket to the Inaugural Ball," she says. "That's what I want Santa."

MSN.COM

'No need for money:' Emma

PEOPLE Emma Watson has "no need for money in her life," femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

The Harry Potter actress — estimated to be worth \$23 million — says, "The wealth side of it hasn't hit me yet because I have no need for money in my life. My life will not be motivated by money."

The 18-year-old also insists she has not adopted a lavish lifestyle and still uses public transport.

"I have a more normal life than people expect," she told USA Today. "People are like, 'That girl

looks like the girl from Harry Potter, but it can't be her on the train.'"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

**Jolie and Pitt say no to TV**

PARENTING When the holiday season rolls around, Brad Pitt says he and Angelina Jolie aren't big spenders for their brood of six, preferring making crafts to giving pricey presents, people.com reports.

With their luxe lifestyle, how do the youngsters avoid craving tons of holiday loot? By nixing TV.

"The kids don't ask for the big gifts for the reason that they don't see a lot of the American cartoon television, which is packed with all those manipulative commercials

for big toys that look so fantastic," says papa Pitt.

"When they do see that stuff is when they start asking for the toys, so we figure if they don't see them, they won't know they're there. So we have

gifts, but we try to keep the money spent to a minimum."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

**Jodie's relapse led to custody woes?**

PEOPLE A judge made a temporary ruling Wednesday that Jodie Sweetin's custody over eight-month-old daughter Zoie must only be in Sweetin's parents' home (where she currently lives) or in her parents' presence, people.com is reporting.

The judge made his ruling after Sweetin recently underwent an emergency investigation by an Orange County, Calif., family court for allegations of substance abuse raised by her estranged husband.

Her estranged husband, Cody Herpin, tells People that his "main concern" is to "keep Jodie clean and safe."

Herpin's lawyer, Robert Benavente, tells People the reason for the investigation of Sweetin is "primarily alcohol (abuse), but there's also concern regarding methamphetamines."

"Jodie absolutely has not relapsed into using meth," Sweetin's lawyer Wilma Presley tells People.

"She merely confessed to having several glasses of wine over dinner recently and felt guilty about that. She is currently in a 12-step program and is working hard on her sobriety. She wants to be clean and sober from everything."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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METRO NEWS SERVICES

No more kids, Smith insists

CHILDREN Will Smith doesn't want any more kids, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 40-year-old actor and his wife Jada Pinkett Smith — who raise three children together — are instead looking forward to becoming grandparents.

Will said: "Jada and I sat down and asked, 'Where do we see ourselves (in 40 years)?' ... We don't have

more children — we have grandchildren."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Moss making sexy lingerie

CAREER Kate Moss is set to design and model a range of sexy lingerie, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The British beauty has extended her contract with U.K. high street fashion chain Topshop for another three years and can't wait to start work on the new lines — which also includes a range of shoes — due in March.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

**Depp ready to marry longtime partner?**

RELATIONSHIP Johnny Depp has reportedly bought an engagement ring for partner Vanessa Paradis, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 45-year-old actor asked a high-end California jewellery store to close to the public so he could privately choose a ring for Vanessa, who he has been dating for 10 years.

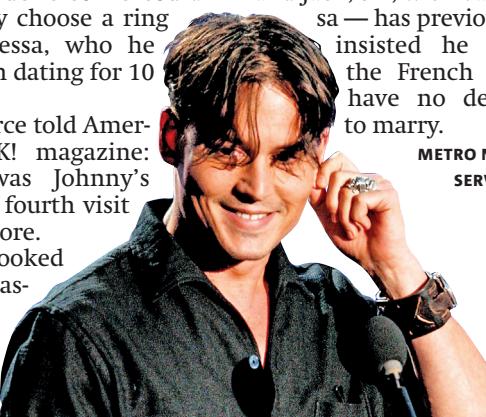
A source told America's OK! magazine: "This was Johnny's third or fourth visit to the store.

"He looked at an assortment of classic soli-

taire diamond rings in platinum settings — a really beautiful selection of elegant and understated rings and made a very large purchase."

Johnny — who has two children, Lily Rose, nine and Jack, six, with Vanessa — has previously insisted he and the French star have no desire to marry.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

**Taylor talks after tooth surgery**

PEOPLE It takes more than having her wisdom teeth removed to keep down Taylor Swift, people.com reports.

The singer has been blogging through the pain, keeping fans posted on her recovery. And the pain? "I'm feeling it," she wrote.

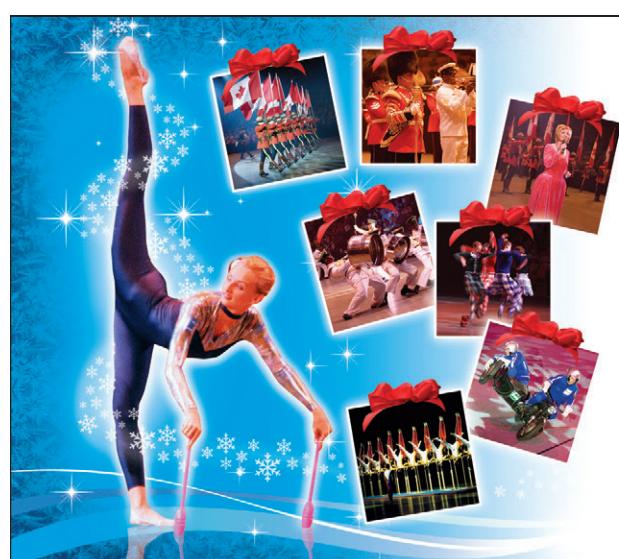
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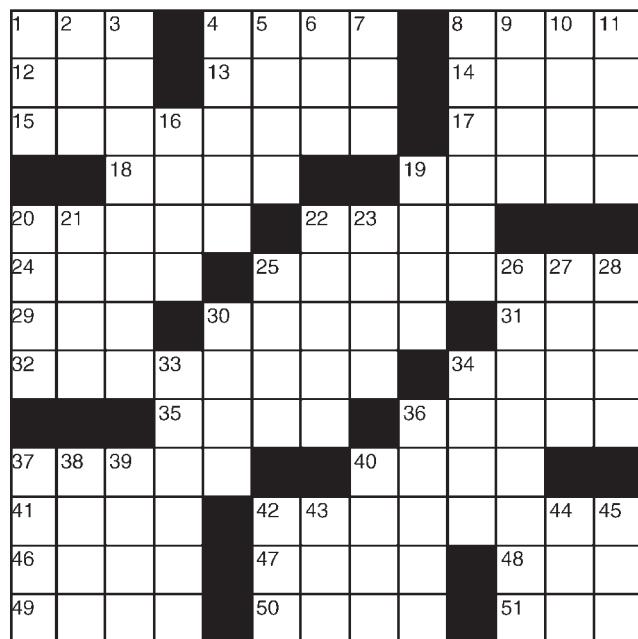
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Crossword across

1 Spasm
 4 Greenish-blue
 8 — Bader Ginsburg
 12 Historic time
 13 Mandlikova of tennis
 14 Birthright barterer
 15 Gilligan, notably
 17 Immediately upcoming
 18 Veer
 19 Bullwinkle's foe
 20 Emulate da Vinci
 22 Sketch
 24 Shrek is one
 25 Us
 29 25-Across, e.g.
 30 Corridors

Crossword down

1 Sleuth, for short
 2 A Gershwin brother
 3 Rigid
 4 Graph
 5 Exhibit ennui
 6 Literary collection
 7 Aye undoer
 8 Fame
 9 Addict
 10 Urban transport
 11 Shacks
 16 Melody
 19 Ovine vocabulary
 20 Spacecraft compartments
 21 Chills and fever
 22 "La — Vita"
 23 Legislation

25 Tug hard
 26 Sad
 27 Marathon fraction
 28 "Born Free" lioness
 30 Estate recipient
 33 Rob
 34 Mostly Mideastern cartel
 36 Mimics
 37 Doggerelist Ogden
 38 Partner in crime
 39 Out of play
 40 Tater
 42 Commonest English word
 43 Thither
 44 Witness
 45 Erstwhile M&M's hue

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



8	7	1	4	2	5	6	3	9
2	3	5	1	6	9	8	7	4
9	4	6	7	8	3	1	5	2
4	1	3	8	9	2	5	6	7
6	2	7	5	3	4	9	1	8
5	9	8	6	7	1	2	4	3
3	8	4	9	5	6	7	2	1
7	5	2	3	1	8	4	9	6
1	6	9	2	4	7	3	8	5

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

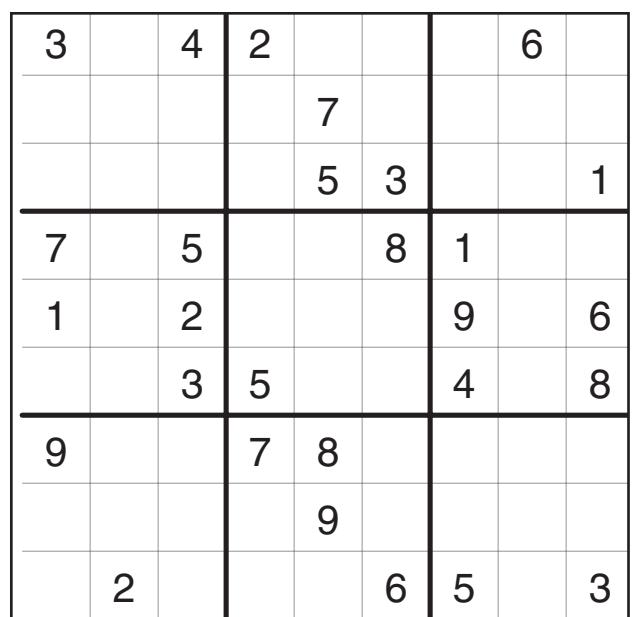
SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min Genius
 13-17 min Scholar

17-21 min Smart
 21-25 min Not bad
 25+ min Keep practising

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.



Horoscopes

ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 20



A trustworthy person has remarkable news. A disturbance can produce a warning. You'll want to escape from a weird dilemma.

LIBRA

SEPT 23-OCT 23



A disagreement about benefits will lead to teasing. A friend will happily agree to make changes. A separation leads to a breakthrough.

TAURUS

APRIL 21-MAY 21



Reorganize a sluggish system right away. A threat will jog somebody's memory. You can get ahead by leaving a sad place.

SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22



Show your support when a relationship begins. An eccentric person is making a big mistake. A friend causes a hullabaloo.

GEMINI

MAY 22-JUNE 21



An amiable manner influences a realist. Don't count your blessings in public. You shouldn't push optimism to a cynical person.

SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21



Some people will be switching partners. By not worrying, you can correct a problem. Yield to the facts, no matter what happens.

CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22



A prosperous guy needs medical attention. Shabbiness will not be acceptable to a lady. Don't be a fool when crossing a street.

CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 20



A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

LEO

JULY 23-AUG 23



Check your documents carefully. A magnificent man takes the other side in a conflict. Difficulties arise when you are too aggressive.

AQUARIUS

JAN 21-FEB 18



Never smirk when someone is discussing their ego. Some mighty odd events will make you flinch. Don't defend your spending with a whiner.

VIRGO

AUG 24-SEPT 22



Time passes slowly while awaiting a disclosure. A decent man gives a warning about unreliability. An alarmist rouses the neighbourhood.

PISCES

FEB 19-MARCH 20



An ill friend will discuss his personal agony. Your lack of concern is the point of a story. Keep your side of a bargain.

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741 Bedford Hwy.

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Bridgewater Mall
Eastern Office Supplies
136 Logan Rd.

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Aucoin's
14803 Cabot Trail Hwy.

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Aiant Business Solutions Store
202 Brownlow Ave.

Aiant Stores
Penhorn Mall
Mic Mac Mall

Axis Mobility
336 Windmill Road
Atlantic Superstore
650 Portland St.
Nova Communications
167 Trider Avenue
Wacky Wheatley's
122 Main St.

DIGBY
Peck Audiotronics
163 Hwy. 303

ELMSDALE
DownEast Communications
269 Hwy. 214

FALL RIVER
DownEast Communications
Fall River Plaza

GLACE BAY
The Rolling Phones
Peoples Mall

GREENWOOD
Aiant Store
Greenwood Mall

HALIFAX
Aiant Stores
Halifax Shopping Centre (upper and lower)

Scoti Square
201 Chain Lake Dr

5475 Spring Garden Road
CIBC Telecom
380 Bedford Highway

DownEast Communications
Maritime Centre

Scoti Square
West End Mall

Quarterback Communications
102 Chain Lake Drive

Wacky Wheatley's
201 Chain Lake Dr.

Wireless Wave
7001 Mumford Rd

LIVERPOOL
MacPhersons
137 Bristol Ave.

LOWER SACKVILLE
DownEast Communications
Sobeys, 752 Sackville Dr.

Atlantic Superstore,
745 Sackville Dr.

NEW GLASGOW
Aiant Store
Highland Square Mall

NEW MINAS
Aiant Store
County Fair Mall

Wacky Wheatley's
8961 Commercial St.

NORTH SYDNEY
The Rolling Phones
North Sydney Mall

PORT HAWKSLEY
The Rolling Phones
Shediac Plaza

Sobeys, 622 Reeves St

PORTER'S LAKE
DownEast Communications
5228 Hwy. 7

Quarterback Communications
102 Chain Lake Dr.

SAULNIERVILLE
Seashore Electronics/
The Source by CC

Saulnierville Mall

SHELBYNE
Video Focus
32 King St.

SYDNEY
The Rolling Phones
Value Check Plaza

SYDNEY RIVER
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Value Check Plaza

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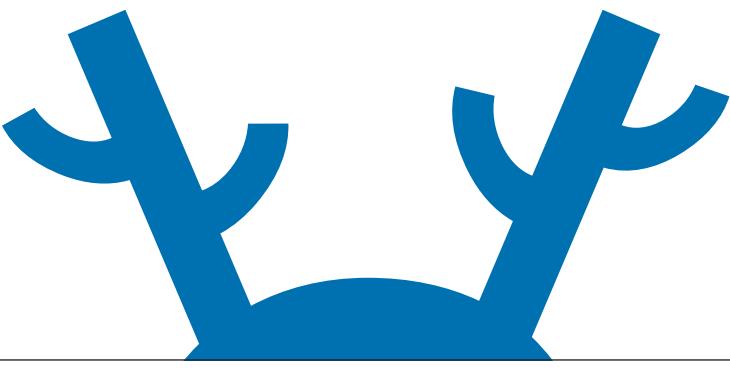
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